✳ **arihant**

151

ESSAYS

PANORAMIC COVERAGE ON TOPICS OF
Contemporary, Social, Environmental, Political, Education,
Economic, Science & Technology, International,
Personalities, Proverbial & Idiomatic, Sports etc.

SC GUPTA

Contents

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

1

GST

How will it Work in India?

Outlines

- What is GST?
- Central taxes replaced by GST Bill and state taxes subsumed by it.
- The Lok Sabha passed the GST Bill.
- Provisions of the Bill.
- Benefits of GST
    - (i) For Industries and Businesses.
    - (ii) For Central and State Governments.
    - (iii) For the Consumers

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an indirect tax levied when a consumer buys a good or service. India's current tax scenario is riddled with various indirect taxes which the GST aims to subsume with a single pan India comprehensive tax, by bringing all such taxes under a single umbrella. The aims of bill to eliminate the cascading effect of taxes on production and distribution prices on goods and services.

Cascading effect of taxes is caused due to levy of different charges by State and Union Governments separately. This tax structure raises the tax-burden on Indian products, affecting their prices, and as a result, sales in the international market. The new tax regime will therefore, help boost exports. In the changed scenario, the following taxes under Centre and States will be subsumed in GST.

Central Taxes replaced by GST Bill Central Excise Duty, Additional Duties of Excise and Customs, Special Additional Duty of Customs (SAD), Service Tax and Cess and Surcharges on supply of goods and services

State Taxes Subsumed in the GST Bill VAT, Central Sales Tax, Purchase Tax, Luxury Tax, Entry Tax, Entertainment Tax, Taxes on advertisements, lotteries, betting, gambling and State Cess and Surcharge.

The Lok Sabha passed The Constitution (122nd Amendment) (GST) Bill, 2014 on 8th August, 2016. The bill was passed by two-third majority, with 443 members voting in its favour and none against in the final vote. Introduced in Lok Sabha

in May 2015, the Bill was passed by Rajya Sabha on 3rd August, 2016 with 203 votes in favour and none against. The passage of this historic GST Bill has now paved the way for the concept of one nation, one tax.

The Union Government has set the ambitious target to roll out of the Goods and Services Tax, (GST) from 1st April, 2017. It was announced by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley after unveiling a detailed road map for GST implementation. This announcement was made after Rajya Sabha had passed The Constitution (122nd Amendment) (GST) Bill, 2014.

Provisions of the Bill

- The GST will have two components keeping in mind the federal structure of India: the Central GST (CGST) and the State GST (SGST).
- For goods and services that pass through several states or imports, the Centre will levy another tax, the Integrated GST (IGST).
- Alcohol for human consumption has been kept out of the purview of GST.
- It empowers the centre to impose an additional tax of upto 1% on the inter-state supply of goods for two years or more. This tax will accrue to states from where the supply originates.
- Initially, GST will not apply to some products such as petroleum crude, high speed diesel, motor spirit (petrol), natural gas and aviation turbine fuel. The GST Council will decide when GST will be levied on them.
- Tobacco and tobacco products will be subject to GST. The centre may also impose excise duty on tobacco.
- Parliament may provide for compensation to states for revenue losses arising out of the implementation of GST for upto 5 years, based on the recommendations of the GST Council.

Benefits of GST
For Industries and Businesses

- There will be uniformity of tax rates and structures across the country. It will increase certainty and ease of doing business i.e. make it tax neutral, irrespective of the choice of place of doing business in the country.
- Due to removal of cascading, it will have a system of seamless tax-credits throughout the value-chain, and across boundaries of States. It will help to reduce hidden costs of doing business.
- It would make compliance easy and transparent. The GST regime will have a robust and comprehensive IT system. Therefore, all tax payer services such as registrations, payments, returns, etc will be available to the taxpayers online.
- It will reduce transaction costs of doing business that will eventually lead to an improved competitiveness for the trade and industry.
- The subsuming of major Central and State indirect taxes in GST would reduce the cost of locally manufactured goods and services. It will increase the competitiveness of Indian goods and services in the international market and give boost to Indian exports.

151 Essays

2

For Central and State Governments

- GST backed with a robust end-to-end IT system will be simpler and easier to administer than all other indirect taxes of the Centre and State levied so far.
- The robust IT infrastructure of GST regime will result in better tax compliance that will curb leakages and incentivise tax compliance by traders.
- GST will lead to higher revenue efficiency as it is expected to decrease the cost of collection of tax revenues of the government.

For the Consumers

- Due to single and transparent tax proportionate to the value of goods, and services: it will remove many hidden taxes leading to transparency of taxes paid to the final consumer.
- The overall tax burden on most commodities will come down because of efficiency gains and prevention of leakages which will benefit consumers.

Goods and Services Tax has all the ingredients of a modern, seamless taxation system. But its success will depend on taking onboard all the stakeholders and eliminating all the irritants which goes against the principles of GST. Goods and Services Tax will also contribute towards a robust macro-economic parametre, thereby increasing investor sentiment. Finally, the consumers will be ultimate beneficiary as it would eliminate the cascading effect of tax.

Vocab Card

1. **Levied** an amount of money, such as tax; 2. **Riddled** something or someone difficult to understand; 3. **Subsume** to included something or someone as part of a larger group; 4. **Cascading** a large of number of things that happen quickly in a series; 5. **Regime** a system of management; 6. **Unveiling** to show or reveal; 7. **Robust** strongly formed or built; 8. **Curb** to control or limit something; 9. **Stakeholders** a person or business that has invested money in something.

151 Essays

3

≫ 2

Digital India
Objectives and Challenges

Outlines
- Vision of Digital India.
- Aims of this programme.
- Challenges of this programme.
- The overall scope of Digital India.
- Appreciated by the global investors.

The vision of Digital India is to transform the country into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. It would ensure that government services are available to citizens electronically. This programme was launch on 2nd July, 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks and improving digital literacy.

This progromme will be implemented in phases till 2018. This programme has been envisaged by Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY) with the active participation of Ministry of Communications and IT, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development and Ministry of Health.

Right from the day of its launch, the programme has managed to garner praises from across the different sectors and is considered to play an important role in the transformation of India's digital infrastructure. It will act as a catalyst for the investment in the information technology sector and thus, generate employment.

Digital India programmes is centered on three key vision areas *viz.*, infrastructure as utility to every citizen, Governance and services on demand and digital empowerment of citizens.

(i) Digital infrastructure as a utility to every citizen includes high speed internet as a core utility shall be made available in all Gram Panchayats. Cradle to given digital identity, unique, lifelong, online and authenticable. Mobile phone and bank account would enable participation in digital and financial space at individual level. Easy access to Common Service Centre within their locality. Shareable private space on a public cloud. Safe and secure cyber-space in the country.

(ii) Governance and services on demand includes government services available in real time from online and mobile platforms. All citizen entitlements to be available on the cloud to ensure easy access. Government services digitally transformed for improving ease of doing business. Making financial transactions above a threshold, electronic and cashless. Leveraging Global Information System (GIS) for decision support systems and development.

(iii) Digital empowerment of citizens includes universal digital literacy. All digital resources universally accessible. All government documents/certificates to be available on the cloud. Availability of digital resources/services in Indian languages. Collaborative digital platforms for participative governance. Portability of all entitlements for individuals through the cloud.

In lieu of the vision of a Digital India, the government aims to provide high-speed internet connectivity as a utility to every citizen, ensure fast delivery of public services utilising the online platform and build digital literacy among the masses. The programme aims at connecting India's cities, towns and villages via high speed broadband, along with a system of networks and data centres called the National Information Centre.

Some of the facilities which will be provided through this initiative are

Government launched a digital locker under the name 'DigiLocker'. DigitalLocker System aims to minimise the usage of physical documents and enable sharing of e-documents across agencies.

e-hospital portal will help the citizens to avail health services online by issuing a Unique Health Identification number. Attendance.gov.in is a website to keep a record of the attendance of government employees on a real-time basis. This initiative started with implementation of a common Biometric Attendance System (BAS) in the Central Government offices located in Delhi.

My.Gov.in is a platform to share inputs and ideas on matters and governance. It is a platform for citizen endorsement in governance, through a 'Discuss', 'Do' and 'Disseminate' approach. Early harvest programmes aim at developing an IT platform for mass messaging and biometric attendance for all the government employees. It also aims at setting up Wi-Fi facilities in all the universities. e-Kranti programmers will be helpful for electronic delivery of services such as health care, education, justice, educating farmers etc.

National scholarship portal is one stop solution for end to end scholarship process right from submission of student application, verification, sanction and disbursal to end beneficiary for all the scholarships provided by the Government of India. Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Mobile APP is being used by people and Government organisations for achieving the goals of Swachh Bharat Mission.

The aim of Digital india programme is to achieve zero imports of electronics by 2020 through increased level of manufacturing of electronic items such as consumer and medical electronics.

151 Essays

5

With the help of smart cards, efforts will be made to provide clarity on incentives, skill development, government procurement and taxation. The programme also intends to train one crore people in towns and villages in five years. The digital platform is expected to serve nine verticals namely, e-Governance, e-Kranti, public internet access programme, broadband highway, information access for all, mobile connectivity, early harvest programme, IT for jobs and electronic manufacturing.

As a utility, the internet has a tangible value and should be helpful in reducing the leakages in the welfare scheme and provide huge economic benefits by enabling better decision making. The citizen portal mygov.in acts as a connecting link between the citizens and the government.

The challenges of 'Digital India' project are

- In order to accommodate, such a vast amount of data, India will require massive data centres with mirroring. Data mirroring means backing up the data at alternate sites.
- This would require a large amount of investment in order to set-up the state of art facilities in different parts of the country. These data centres have to be technically robust in order to prevent any failures.
- The biggest challenge of Digital India is the cyber security. In order to safeguard the data, the government needs to place robust security mechanism into the picture.
- The cyber laws of the country need to be strengthened and updated according to the international standards.

The overall scope of Digital India is to prepare India for a knowledge future. On being transformative that is to realise IT (India Talent) + IT (Information Technology) is equal to IT (India Tomorrow). Making technology central to enabling change. On being an umbrella programme covering many departments. Each individual element stands on its own but it is also part of the larger picture. The weaving together makes the mission transformative in totality.

The global investors have applauded the Digital India programme. Many of them have come forward to support this initiative. If the government is successful in implementing the Digital India programme, it will play an important role in the development of economy and stabilising its position in the international market.

---

1. **Empower** to give somebody the power or authority to do something;
2. **Cradle** the place where something important began; 3. **Cyber-space** the imaginary place where electronic messages etc exist while they are being sent between computers; 4. **Leverage** to get as much advantage or profit as possible from something that you have;
5. **Collaborative** done by several people or groups of people working together; 6. **Portability** the quality of easy to carry or more; 7. **Tangible** that can be clearly seen to exist; 8. **Applaud** show strong approval of (a person or action); praise.

Vocab Card

3

Net Neutrality
A Public Demand

Network neutrality is the principle that ensures competition in the online world. All content on the internet travels in the form of data packets across the telecommunication networks around the world. Net neutrality requires that all data travelling over the network be treated equally.

Telecom companies, who own the infrastructure through which data packets passes inter alia argue that they should have a right to control this data flow and the 'freedom' to charge accordingly (to ensure that certain data gets priority over another or that certain data is not carried at all, etc).

Their argument is that since telecom companies spend large amounts of money building the infrastructure (or the tubes through which data packets pass), they should have a say over what content travels over or through it and of course make more money from it. Network neutrality is the principle according to which internet traffic shall be treated equally, without discrimination, restriction or interference regardless of its sender, recipient, type or content, so that Internet users' freedom of choice is not restricted by favouring or disfavouring the transmission of Internet traffic associated with particular content, services, applications or devices.

In the layman's term, net neutrality means internet that allows everyone to communicate freely. It means a service provider should allow access to all content and applications regardless of the source and no websites or pages should be blocked, as long as they aren't illegal. It is like a fixed-telephone line, which is equal to all and no one gets to decide who you call or what you speak. Another aspect of net neutrality is level playing field on the internet.

This means, all websites can co-exist without hampering others. All websites are accessible at the same speed and no particular website of application is favoured. For instance, like electricity, common for all. Net neutrality also means all websites and content creators are treated equal and you don't have to pay extra for faster

internet speed to a particular site or service. Absence of net neutrality will change the face of internet like we've known it. It will force the Internet Service Providers (ISP) to charge companies for services like You Tube or Netflix as they consume more bandwidth and eventually the load of the extra sum will be pushed to the consumers.

Similarly, ISPs can then create slow as well as fast internet lanes, which mean all websites cannot be accessed at the same speed and one can do so only on paying an additional sum. For instance, currently, you have a standard data package and access all the content at the same speed, irrespective of whether it is an international website or national. Similarly, ISPs can also charge extra for the free calls you make using services like WhatsApp, Skype and others and eventually the load of additional payable sum by the Over-The-Top (OTT) players will be pushed onto consumers.

Net neutrality is extremely important for small business owners, startups and entrepreneurs, who can simply launch their businesses online, advertise and products and sell them openly, without any discrimination.

It is essential for innovation and creating job opportunities. Big companies like Google, Twitter and several others are born out of net neutrality. With increasing internet penetration in India and given that we are becoming a breeding ground for startups and entrepreneurs, the lack of net neutrality should worry us greatly. Besides, it is very important for freedom of speech, so that one can voice their opinion without the fear of being blocked or banned.

In the West, in 2010, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had passed an order to prevent Broadband Internet Service Providers from blocking or meddling with the traffic on the web known as the 'Open Internet Order', it ensured the internet remained a level playing field for all. FCC has approved 'net neutrality' rules that prevent internet providers such as Comcast and Verizon from slowing or blocking web traffic or from creating internet fast lanes that content providers such as Netflix must pay for. European Union member states have also been striving for net neutrality.

In India, there is no law that expressly mandates the maintenance of a neutral internet. As of August 2015, there were no laws governing net neutrality in India, which would require that all internet users be treated equally, without discriminating or charging differentially by user, content, site, platform, application, type of attached equipment or mode of communication. There have already been a few violations of net neutrality principles by some Indian service providers.

On 10th February, 2015, Facebook launched Internet.org in India with Reliance Communications. It aims to provide free access to 38 websites through an app. Only Bing was made available as the search engine.

In April 2015, Airtel announced the 'Airtel Zero' scheme. Under the scheme, app firms sign a contract and Airtel provides the apps for free to its customers. The reports of Flipkart, an e-commerce firm, joining the 'Airtel Zero' scheme drew negative response.

151 Essays

8

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had already released a formal consultation paper on Regulatory Framework for Over-The-Top (OTT) services, seeking comments from the public. The consultation paper was criticised for being one sided and its ambiguity. It received condemnation from various politicians and Indian Internet users.

TRAI issued another consultation paper on differential pricing for data services. This was seen as a major improvement over previous consultation paper. However, the debate between telecom regulator and OTT players refuse to die down.

Telecom regulators are of the view that OTT players like WhatsApp, WeChat etc are eating up the main revenue without investing in networks; OTT players, on the other hand, defend themselves by demanding access to web services without any discrimination.

TRAI took a revolutionary decision, prohibiting telecom service providers from levying discriminatory rates for data, thus ruling in favour of net neutrality in India. This move was welcomed by not just by millions of Indians but also by various political parties, business persons, industry leaders and the inventor of the World Wide Web.

The Internet, in its purest form, is a veritable fountain of information. At its core lies a commitment to both openness and a level playing field, where an ability to innovate is perennially maintained. But one of the problems with Free Basics and indeed with Airtel Zero too, is that the consumer has no choice in which websites he or she might want to access free of cost.

Those who are arguing in favour of net neutrality sees this move as a lauduable end that follows unethical means. They are not resistant to the idea of greater penetration of the internet. According to them, negating net neutrality, in a bid to purportedly achieve greater access to the internet in the immediate future, could prove profoundly injurious in the long run.

> **Vocab Card**
>
> 1. **Transmission** the act or proces of transmitting/broadcasting electromagnetic waves from one location to another; 2. **Layman** a person who is not a member of a given profession or who is not expert in some field; 3. **Breeding** training; the producing of offspring; 4. **Meddling** to involve oneself in a matter without right or invitation; interfere officiously and unwantedly; 5. **Mandates** an authoritative order or commission to do something; 6. **Condemnation** strong censure or disapprobation; 7. **Veritable** being truly; 8. **Perennially** lasting for an indefinitely long time or enduring; 9. **Laudable** deserving praise or commendable. 10. **Penetration** the obtaining of a share of a market for some commodity or service; 11. **Purportedly** reputedly or claimed; alleged.

≫ 4

Social Empowerment Programmes in India

Outlines

- Introduction of social empowerment programmes in India.
- Flagship programmes are mainly launched for
  - (i) Rural India
  - (ii) Women
  - (iii) Children
  - (iv) Employment
- Rural schemes for social infrastructure and productive employment.
- Different schemes like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls aims for development of girls.
- Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme for children.
- Different employment programmes to provide basic employment.

Welfare schemes or social empowerment programmes are not the invention of modern age, they were also part of the ancient Mauryan kingdom. Such schemes were continued throughout the ancient, medieval and the pre-modern age. This reveals the fact that empowerment of the poor, marginalised is ingrained in our culture, which has been inherited by the modern age to ensure that rule of law, equality and harmony prevails in the society. Social empowerment schemes though few in numbers and different in character, were also continued by the Britishers.

After independence, the nature of Indian economy, society completely changed due to exploitative nature of British rule. Rural India, which was once self-sufficient, was made uneconomic, poverty stricken and diseased. Mismanagement, famine, prevailing inequality, social culture, traditions were some other reasons that led to marginalisation of rural India, women, children and unemployed youth.

India adopted a mixed economy, where state took initiative to develop the masses. This initiative included establishment of Planning Commission which was nodal agency for flagship programming. To review performance of flagship programme, its effect on Indian economy, empowering the marginalised, flagship programme in four reactions would be chosen i.e. (i) Rural development schemes (ii) Child Welfare Schemes (iii) Women Empowerment Schemes (iv) Employment Schemes.

Rural Development Schemes

The development of rural India is an imperative for inclusive and equitable growth and to unlock huge potential of the population that is presently trapped in poverty with its associated deprivations. Rural schemes are mostly linked to

social infrastructure and provision of gainful and productive employment. The genesis of rural development programme began with Community Development Programme (CDP) in 1952 and was instrumental in raising the standard of living and reconstructing the rural India.

But various factors such as lack of clearly defined priorities, cornering of the benefits by rich and big farmers, lack of coordination among different development departments, administrative inefficiency etc clouded the materialisation of CDP in full scale.

Subsequent to the CDP other rural development programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme, National Rural Employment Programme, TRYSEM, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Antyodaya Programme, Drought-Prone Area Programme. Desert Development Programme, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana etc were initiated.

These programmes obtained mixed results and the fact that rural India still facing many kind of distress, proves their incompetence. To analyse the reason behind such distress, it is pertinent to review certain ongoing flagship scheme.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a right based wage employment programme, which aims at enhancing livelihood security. For successful implementation of MGNREGA, a web enabled Management Information System has also been developed to ensure transparency and accountability. Morever, it was successful in providing employment during lean months, helped increase rural consumption, creation of sustainable asset for agriculture etc.

National Rural Livelihood Mission seeks to reach out all rural poor household in the country and organise them into Self Help Groups (SHGs).

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in a bid to give better rural connectivity, has also included sustainable measures like use of locally available construction material such as waste plastic, fly ash, cold, mix technology. A good road should lead to a good house, hence government aimed at 'shelter for all' through Indira Awas Yojana.

Further National Social Assistance Programme (social security) Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (skill development), Deen Dayal Upadhay Gram Jyoti Yojana (rural electrification) were initiated.

Women Empowerment Schemes

Chiristane Lagarde, Chief, IMF said that, "India's GDP can expand by 27% of the number of female workers would increase to the same level as that of men." Women enjoyed equal powers during the early Vedic period. But since later Vedic they have been subjugated, denied their rights, harrassed etc. In this regard, Ministry of Child and Women Development took the leadership for promoting empowered women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination.

Discrimination against women starts even before her birth (infanticide) that continues with discrimination in health care, education etc. To their rescue came the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme, with a twin aim of not only improving the adverse sex ratio, but also to ensure that girls are educated.

Nutritional defficiency, iron defficiency amongst adolescent girls is a common phenomenon in India. Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls aims all round development of adolescent girls. To safeguard the future of girl child Sukanya Samriddhi Account Saving Scheme was launched which targated parents of girl child, is a part of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign.

One Stop Centre, a sub-scheme of the National Mission for Empowerment of women is intended to support women affected by violence is private and public spaces, within the family, community and at work place. In India, due to socio-cultural, economic environment many women face difficulty like destitute women, or women released from jail, survivors of natural disasters. Moreover, many women fall prey to trafficking. So, Swadhan Scheme comes to rescue of destitute women and Ujjawala for the prevention of trafficking in women.

Child Welfare Schemes

Children of the age group 0-6 years constitute the future human resource of the country. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is one of the world's largest and unique programmes for early child care and development. It is the foremost symbol of country's commitment to its children and nursing mothers, as a response to the challenge of providing pre-school non-formal education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, mobility, reduced learning capacity and mortality on other.

With a view of enhancing enrollment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children. Mid-Day Meal scheme was launched, where all children are served hot cooked meal irrespective of their caste, creed, sex etc. Nelson Mandela said that, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". This aim is realised through the Sarva Shikha Abhiyan (SSA) a Universal Elementary Education Programme with opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children. National child labour project aims at eliminating child labour from hazardous condition and certain occupations and processes.

Employment Schemes

India is said to be refuge of stability and outpost of opportunity. The demographic dividend is a blessing in India's path to development. But all this would only be realised when youth's are provided employment and that too productive and gainful. The shift from agricultural economy and rising opportunity of education, has raised the demand of employment. Employment programme in India is guided to provide basic employment during lean seasons and also meet rising aspiration of the youths.

151 Essays

12

Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme is a credit linked subsidy programme launched by Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) for creation of employment in both rural and urban area of the country.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Rural Livelihood Mission, National Urban Livelihood Mission and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana aims at skilling, building a better India. Similarly, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana is a project to engage rural youth specially BPL and SC/ST segment of population in gainful employment through skill training programme.

India is a nation of diversity. This diversity though colourful, has contradictory sides. The richest of the rich and poorest of the poor, most skilled research oriented scientist to the unskilled agricultural/bonded labour, obesity and malnutrition, are common feature of resurgent India. Hence, welfare schemes are directed at reducing these inequalities. Morever, to be effective and outcome oriented, welfare schemes should be decentralised for implementation purpose.

The use of information technology through E-governance programme to ensure accountability and transparency would go a long way in improving service delivery. And the last but not the least, all welfare schemes should involve citizens, right from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Vocab Card

1. **Reveals** to make (something) publicly or generally known;
2. **Ingrained** existing for a long time and very difficult to change;
3. **Imperative** very important; 4. **Equitable** just or fair; 5. **Dole** something distributed at intervals to the needy 6. **Destitute** extremely poor; 7. **Retention** the ability to keep something; 8. **Statutory** controlled or determined by a law or rule.

» 5

Can Sanitation Programmes Make India Clean and Clear?

Outlines

- Mahatma Gandhi's vision— A clean India.
- Launch of 'Clean India Mission'
- Aim of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- Cleanliness and sanitation play an important role in the promotion of tourism.
- Response of public towards this campaign.
- Responsibility of citizens.
- Some suggestions to improve the cleanliness.

The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi envisioned and dreamt of a clean India where sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness were the indispensable components. The importance of cleanliness in his life can be judged from the fact that he considered 'sanitation ahead of independence'. In order to fulfil the long cherished dream of 'Bapu', 'Clean India Mission' was launched across the country on 2nd October, 2014. Shri Narendra Modi had aptly remarked that, "A Clean India Campaign would be the best tribute that India could pay to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary in 2019".

The 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' aims to eradicate the problem of open defecation by construction of toilets for households and communities, do away with manual scavenging and adapt better solid waste management techniques. Mr Modi has rightly quoted that open defecation, especially by girls and women is a blot on our society. Besides, it was meant to create awareness about the importance of cleanliness among the masses. On the day of its launch, the 'Cleanliness drive' was received with a positive note across the different segments of society with locals, students, politicians, industrialists, celebrities contributing their share.

'A seed of thought' about cleanliness and its importance was planted in the minds of millions of Indians. In no time 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' became a topic of households as well as national discussions. A country that shied away from talking about toilets and defecation was actually discussing these. This was definitely a positive step in the direction of 'Clean India Mission'.

To take it one step further, the government introduced the rankings for the cleanest cities in 2016 with Mysuru bagging the first place followed by Chandigarh. This move of the government encouraged the cities and states across the country to work on the different areas of cleanliness and sanitation in their territory.

Cleanliness and sanitation are known to play an important role in the promotion of tourism in India. India is one of the most sought after tourist destinations in the world. It is a home to picturesque locations, historical monuments and splendid architecture, craftsmanship and art. Besides our country is known for its hospitality all over the world.

All the aforementioned factors definitely have a deep effect on tourists from all over the world. More tourism means more growth of our economy. Tourism contributes a major share of the GDP as well as adds on to the foreign reserves of the country.

With the tourist visiting a particular place, there is a boost to the local craftsmen and economy of that particular area. All said and done, it is the unhygienic conditions at the most exotic tourist destinations that leave a bad impression on the mind of the tourists.

Undoubtedly the official statistics and numbers released by the government agencies claim 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' to be a success. But the success of any government programme or scheme is directly proportional to the response it receives from the public. In 1999, a drive similar to the 'Clean India Mission', 'Nirmal Bharat Abhiyaan' was started with a similar mission and vision. However, it was doomed and was left merely as a 'name' in the records government.

India is our motherland and we owe a lot to it. We, the people of this nation, need to understand our social responsibility towards the country. No programme or scheme can be a success without the active participation of public in it, no matter which celebrity endorses it. 'Swachh Bharat' is not restricted to keeping the streets and public places clean. It has many more dimensions to it. People need to keep their surroundings clean whether it is their home, office or neighbourhood.

This can't be limited to a particular day and has to be practised throughout the year. Every single effort in this direction counts. Cleanliness should not be left on sanitation workers only as their job. It has to be the mission of the 1.2 billion people of our country to make our motherland clean. It's not just the talking that will help in this case.

With the government doing its part by providing funds and building infrastructure, it is on the people to cooperate with the government to make this mission a success. Social media platform can be used wisely to highlight the small gestures and actions of cleanliness.

Educated and literate people must make efforts to make their house and support staff understand the importance of cleanliness and discourage their practice of open defecation. It is important for the people of lower strata to understand the ill effects of open defecation which involves the killing of thousands of babies, stunted growth of children and spread of various diseases. Littering on the roadside, in the school, at the workplace, at home must be avoided.

151 Essays

An hour so must be squeezed from our weekly schedule and this hour must be dedicated to the cleanliness of the surroundings. Parents, schools and educational institutions need to sensitise the children on different dimensions of cleanliness and encourage them to adopt healthy principles of sanitation. NGOs must actively participate in this drive and guide the citizens with innovative methods of waste reduction.

They can work in collaboration with different research institutes to come out with some innovative techniques. Celebrities and public figures must 'lead by example'.

As Modiji had remarked during his speech that 'Quit India, Clean India' was the half unfulfilled dream of Bapu. It becomes the moral duty of all the citizens and the government to work in collaboration to make India clean and fulfil the unfulfilled dream of Bapu.

> 1. **Indispensable** vital, important; 2. **Components** elements, parts; 3. **Eradicate** remove completely; 4. **Scavenging** to clean away dirt or refuse; 5. **Segments** sections or divisions; 6. **Shied** away keep away from; 7. **Defecation** the discharge of faeces from the body; 8. **Sought** after much in demand, generally desired; 9. **Picturesque** attractive, delightful; 10. **Exotic** strikingly, excitingly or mysteriously different or unusual; 11. **Doomed** ill fated, likely to have an unfortunate outcome; 12. **Endorses** support or approval 13. **Dimensions** feature or aspect of a situation 14. **Infrastructure** basic systems and services 15. **Gestures** signals or indications; 16. **Strata** layers; 17. **Stunted** hampered, restricted; 18. **Littering** make an area untidy with rubbish; 19. **Collaboration** the action of working with someone to produce something.

Vocab Card

6

Dream of Smart Cities
Myth or Reality in India

Outlines
- Meaning of Smart City Project.
- Some additional components of the core infrastructure of a smart city.
- Declaring 100 smart cities in the next five years.
- Gap between the dream of a smart city and its accomplishment.
- Collaboration with other countries to develop smart cities.
- Suggestions for its successful implementations.

The project of 'Smart Cities' was announced soon after the Narendra Modi led government came into power. This was considered as a step in the direction of urban India's renewal. Over the past few years, the urban cities have been witnessing an increase in migration of population from rural to urban India. This influx has posed a number of challenges for the natives, migrants as well as the government. Smart cities are considered as a solution to cope with the challenges of urbanisation.

'Smart city' is an urban region that is environment friendly, technologically well-equipped and has an efficient core infrastructure along with market viability. The core infrastructure of a smart city includes adequate water supply, assured electricity, sanitation, solid waste management, efficient public transport and affordable housing, especially for the poor.

Robust IT connectivity and digitalisation, e-governance and citizen participation, safety and security of citizens are some of the additional components of the core infrastructure of a smart city. Information technology is the cornerstone of all the services offered to the people. Sensors are used to collect, compile and integrate real time data of electricity, gas, water, traffic and other government analytics into a smart grid, which is to be fed into the computers.

With the availability of 'real-time data', computers can ensure nearly perfect operations such as synchronisation of traffic signals during the peak traffic hours, striking a balance between the demand and supply of electricity networks etc. As the premise of a smart city is based on the market drivers of demand and supply, these cities promise benefits to the businesses, citizens, environment and the government along with sustainable development.

Ever since the launch of this project, government's think tanks, ministries and private firms have been working together to make this dream project a success. As of now, the government has announced an initial target of '100 smart cities' in

the next five years. Instead of building brand new cities, the government plans to develop and build smart towns on the lines of smart cities in the vicinity of the existing urban areas, upgrade the existing mid-sized cities, and build settlements along the industrial corridors. The smart cities are expected to have 'special investment regions' along with a modified tax structure in order to attract foreign investments.

These cities are considered to be the magnets for investments which will eventually lead to the creation of a large number of jobs in the region. The project will witness a large number of 'public-private partnerships' in its due course.

Although everything looks rosy on papers, there is a gap between the dream of a smart city and its accomplishment. The government has allocated ₹ 7000 crore to the Smart City Project in the budget which is roughly ₹ 70 crore per city. This amount is not enough for the development of a smart city.

It is great as on initial kick-start to the project, but funds need to be pooled in, at repeated intervals. India will have to channelise its untapped resources in order to fill these lacunae. As the government plans to integrate the smart cities with the existing ones, it needs to narrow down the challenges that are specific to a city and then work upon them. The project of the smart city needs to be implemented and executed in a phased manner.

There may be regions which boast of a robust infrastructure but continue to face the shortage of electricity and water. At the same time, there may be regions which have uninterrupted water and power supply but have poor infrastructure. Obviously, the challenges for both the regions will be different and so will be their solutions. Many countries and multinational giants have expressed their interest for participation in the development of the smart cities, which will eventually lead to a large number of public private partnerships.

As a beginning to the Smart City Project, MoU,s have been signed between the US Government and three State Governments of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh for the smart cities of Ajmer, Allahabad and Vishakapatnam respectively. Each state has been assigned a task force with representatives from Central Government, State Government and US Trade and Development Agency. The final report submitted by the Task Force Teams will be the basis for the action plan for these cities.

Germany has decided to partner with India's smart city programme and will help developing Kochi (Kerala), Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) as smart cities. These three cities are among the top 20 cities selected by Urban Development Ministry which are to be developed as smart cities.

Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan Government have set up Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) for the implementation of smart city plans. SPV has been set up for five cities, Jabalpur, Indore, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) and Jaipur and Udaipur (Rajasthan).

151 Essays

18

The Smart City Project will involve multilayer implementation as well as execution with the centre, state and local bodies playing their respective roles. With a large number of stakeholders involved right from its inception till its implementation and execution, the government will have to simplify the regulatory aspects of the different processes involved. It also needs to take care of the possible legal issues arising from the same.

All the clearances and approvals required for this project must be done online and in a time bound fashion. The government needs to ensure that the local bodies which will take care of the implementation have sufficient human resources as well as technical and financial capabilities to carry out the process of implementation successfully. If required, special training should be imparted to them for the same.

Smart cities will need smart people. The people need to be the co-developers of the system and not just be the end users. Universities, students, private and government institutes must be encouraged to actively participate in the process of upgrading the system. We shouldn't forget that an important aspect of being smart is to curb the wastage and make sustainable use of the available resources. The government as well as the citizens, must look for alternate renewable sources of energy. This will lighten the burden on the power sector and contribute to a large amount of savings.

According to the industry experts, such cities require a timeline of 20-30 years for their successful completion. As the government is already working on a tight deadline of five years, it needs to understand the importance of meticulous planning and coordination in regards to this project. In case the government is successful in working on the aforementioned aspects of the smart cities' project, this dream can actually turn into a reality for billions of Indians. All said and done, nothing is impossible.

Vocab Card

1. **Influx** arrival or entry of large numbers of people or things; 2. **Viability** capable of working successfully; 3. **Cornerstone** a vital part, keystone; 4. **Premise** a statement or idea that forms the basis for a theory, argument or line of reasoning; 5. **Think Tank** a group of experts brought together, usually by a government, to develop ideas on a particular subject and to make suggestions for action; 6. **Vicinity** the area surrounding a place; 7. **Lacunae** gaps or missing portions; 8. **Meticulous** very careful and precise.

Child Labour in India

An Unavoidable Dilemma

Outlines
- Meaning of child labour.
- Reasons of increase in child labour.
- Role of the government of fight against child labour.
- NGO's important role.
- Some suggestions to do away with this problems.
- Ensuring foolproof law for eradication.
- New law passed.

Childhood is considered to be the golden period of one's life but this doesn't hold true for some children who struggle to make their both ends meet during their childhood years. At a tender age, which is supposed to be an age of playing and going to school, they are compelled to work in factories, industries, offices or as domestic helps. Child labour means employment of children in any kind of work that hampers their physical and mental development, deprives them of their basic educational and recreational requirements. It is a blot on our society and speaks volumes about the inability of our society to provide a congenial environment for the growth and development of the children.

Earlier, the children used to help their parents in agricultural practices such as sowing, harvesting, reaping and taking care of cattle etc. But industrialisation and urbanisation have in a way encouraged child labour. Children are employed in hazardous work such as bidi rolling, cracker industry, pencil, matchbox and bangle making industries etc. In the bidi industry, children are expected to perform all the chores of rolling, binding and closing the ends of bidis using their nimble fingers. The cracker industry poses threat to the lives of the children due to their direct exposure to the explosive material. The bangle and pencil making industries make the child susceptible to different respiratory problems and lung cancer, in the worst cases. Besides, children are employed as labourers in the garment, leather, jewellery and sericulture industry.

A number of other factors could be attributed to the rise of this menace. In the poor and lower strata families, children are considered to be an extra earning hand. These families have a conviction that every child is an earner so, more the number of children. The children are expected to shoulder their parents' responsibilities. Parental illiteracy is also one of the contributors to this problem. Education tends to take a backseat in the lives of these children. The uneducated parents consider education as an investment in comparison to the returns which

they get in the form of earnings of their children. The child labourers are subjected to unhygienic conditions, late working hours and different atrocities which have a direct effect on their cognitive development. The young and immature minds of the children find it difficult to cope with such situations leading to different emotional and physical problems. Employers also prefer child labourers in comparison to the adults. This is because they can extract more work and still afford to pay the children lesser amount. Bonded child labour is one of the worst forms of child labour. In this, the children are made to work in order to pay off a loan or debt of the family.

It can be considered as a form of slavery where the children assist their parents as they inherit the debt from them. Bonded labourers are most commonly employed in the agriculture sector. Bonded labour has resulted into trafficking of the children from rural to urban areas in order to work as domestic helps or in small production houses.

The government has an important role to play in this fight against child labour. As poverty is one of the major cause of child labour in India, the government needs to assure that it provides basic amenities to all its citizens and there is an equal distribution of wealth. It needs to generate sufficient jobs to assure employability to the poor.

At the same time, NGOs can provide vocational training to people in order to get them good jobs. The government, in collaboration with NGOs, should reach out to the poor people to make them understand the importance of education. The parents as well as the children should be made aware of the government's initiative to provide free education to all the children between the age group of 6-14 years. The parents must be encouraged to send their children to the schools instead of work places.

To prohibit the child labour in India Nobel Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi took an initiative. He is the founder of Bachpan Bachao Aandolan (BBA), an organisation dedicated towards the eradication of child labour and rehabilitation of the rescued former child workers. Educated citizens can contribute significantly in doing away with child labour. They can play an important role in spreading the word about the harmful effects of child labour on the overall development of a child. Affluent and high income group families can pool in funds to support the education of poor children. In fact, the schools and colleges can come up with innovative teaching programmes for the poor children. The principle of 'Each one, teach one' can be followed. Children of the support staff (peons, clerks etc) of schools and colleges can be offered free education.

The Indian Government has eroded many laws to protect child rights, namely the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, the Factories Act, 1948, the Mines Act, 1952, the Bonded Labour System Abolition Act and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. Most of these acts prohibit the employment of children below the age of 14 years in factories, hazardous occupations or in bondage. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 mandates free and compulsory education to all children between the

151 Essays

age group of 6 to 14 years. Apart from this, it also reserves 25 per cent seats in every private school for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of the society.

The National Policy on Child Labour, 1987 looks into the rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations. The Article 39 of the Indian Constitution declares the duty of the state to provide the children the facilities to develop in a healthy and congenial environment and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In May 2015, the government approved a proposal allowing children below 14 years of age to work in family enterprises or entertainment industry with specific conditions.

But there should be a total ban on the employment of small children in any activity other than going to school and getting educated. The government needs to ensure that it has foolproof laws and they are properly executed as well as implemented. Strict measures need to be taken against those who encourage child labour in any form.

Children are the future of a country and it is the childhood which has a profound impact on the future of a child. So, it becomes the collective responsibility of the citizens, society and the government to provide them an environment which helps them to bring out the best of their capabilities, thus participate in the nation building process.

Children are the future citizens of a country. Childhood experiences and foundation will have a great impact on these children's overall development. A nation full of poverty ridden illiterate children cannot make progress. It should be the collective responsibility of the society and the government to provide children with a healthy and conducive environment which will help them to develop their innate capabilities and use their skills effectively.

The need of the hour is to expand the machinery for enforcing the various laws on child labour. If child labour is to be eradicated from India, the government and those responsible for the enforcement need to do their jobs sincerely. Success can be achieved only through social engineering on a major scale combined with broad based economic growth.

1. Make both ends meet earn just enough money to live on; **2. Hamper** restrict, obstruct; **3. Congenial** agreeable, enjoyable; **4. Hazardous** risky, dangerous; **5. Nimble** light, quick moving; **6. Susceptible** open to, responsive to; **7. Sericulture** silk-farming; **8. Menace** danger, peril; **9. Conviction** opinion or belief; **10. Atrocities** wicked or cruel act; **11. Cope with** deal with problems or difficulties **12. Consent** agreement, assent; **13. Affluent** rich, well off people; **14. Mandates** give authority to act in a certain; **15. Rehabilitation** to return someone to a good, healthy or normal life; **16. Conducive** helpful, useful; **17. Social engineering** the practise of making laws or using other methods to influence public opinion and solve social problems.

Vocab Card

≫ 8

Organic Farming
Is it Really Feasible for All?

Outlines

- What is organic farming?
- The method adopted by it is different from conventional agriculture.
- Government's initiative to encourage.
- Different methods of organic farming.
- Areas ideals for organic farming.
- Steps to be taken for it.
- Advantages of organic farming.

Organic foods are the ones which are derived from organic farming. Organic farming is a method where the crops are raised on a piece of land with the use of organic wastes, namely; crop, animal and farm waste, compost, green manure and other biological materials along with bio-fertilizers (microbes which help in composting). They are used in order to maintain essential nutrients of soil and help in sustainable production in an eco-friendly environment. Food and Agriculture Organisation defines organic farming as, "a unique production management system which promotes and enhances agroecosystem health, including biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity".

Organic farming can be carried out by various agronomical methods. These on-farm methods are distinct from conventional agriculture. Organic farming has a very high potential in hilly areas and can become a game changer in North-Eastern region. At a time when Genetically Modified (GM) crops are making forays into the agriculture sector, it is imperative to weigh its (GM Crop) pros and cons against organic produce.

Organic production systems are based on specific and precise standards of production which aim at achieving optimal agroecosystems which are socially, ecologically and economically sustainable.

The Indian Government has taken a number of initiatives to boost organic farming in India

National Project on Organic Farming is a continuing Central Sector Scheme since 10th Five Year Plan. Planning Commission approved the scheme as pilot project for the remaining two and a half years of 10th Five Year Plan. This scheme is continuing till the end of 12th Five Year Plan. Government is promoting production of organic crops, fruits and vegetables etc through various schemes *viz* National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Horticulture Mission for North-East and

Himalayan States (HMNEH), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility (NPMSHF), National Project on Organic Farming (NPOF), Network Project on Organic Farming under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and various schemes of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

The government is also promoting organic farming by providing incentives to cultivators of organic food products and providing organic farming certification to a group of farmers on nominal cost.

In this way, government aims to cover 5 lakh acres in 3 years with 10000 clusters. The scheme will raise farmer's income and create potential market for traders. It will also provide incentives to farmers for natural resource mobilisation. Any river plain across the world has a very high potential for generating organic inputs. India, because of its diverse climate and low input cost of materials is a fertile ground for organic farming. Preservation of soil health by employing farm waste, animal husbandry waste, domestic biodegradable waste etc is the thrust of the scheme.

Many methods that are employed for organic-farming which include crop rotation, bio-composting, biological pest control, green manuring for soil management etc. Green Revolution discouraged multi-cropping and encouraged wheat monoculture which is the main cause behind diminishing returns. Therefore, crop rotation can ensure restoration of essential nutrients. Bio-composting is another method of organic farming. Here, the farm waste is used along with other available wastes. They are decomposed with the help of microbes and are then applied as natural fertilizer. Biological pest control is an additional method of organic farming where other organisms are used to control pests with limited supply of chemicals. Similarly, green manuring is a method where the stubs of uprooted plants or hay are burnt in the field in order to make them act as a source of nutrients.

Organic farming has a very high potential in hilly areas. As these areas are fragile, organic farming be encouraged in these areas. Use of excessive fertilizer leads to eutrophication in lakes which is detrimental to aquatic life and can also lead to rise of invasive species. Organic farming may be the apt solution for hilly tracts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal, Uttarakhand and the North-East.

Genetically modified crops are a strict no for organic farming. They are diametrically opposite. As one promotes diversity, the other (GM) is reliant on uniformity of gene. Genetically modified crops is capable of disturbing the natural balance of environment. Organic farming, on the other hand, is deep rooted in the processes of nature and will not disturb the balance of nature.

Since organic farming strikes a balance between soil health, human health and environmental health, it appears to be one of the viable sustainable options. Based on the above advantages, Government of India made an Organic Farming Policy in 2005 to promote the same. Major thrust areas of

151 Essays

24

the policy are maintaining soil fertility; identifying crops suitable for organic farming; assuring organic inputs for farming; adopting biological methods of pest and weed control; harnessing traditional and indigenous knowledge; creating awareness about organic produce; development of domestic organic market; simplifying certification system etc.

Organic farming, on one hand has high advantages, but its viability will only be addressed when more cultivated areas come under it. Organic farming has many advantages but there are various factors which resist its widespread adoption. The inputs needed are expensive and are not available widely for extensive, commercial farming. The inputs make the crops expensive and beyond the reach of common people. The productivity of organic farmland is less as compared to conventional farmland. The food quality and safety standards of organic produce vary widely. It is not favourable for subsistence farming as fallow land once in a while is a prerequisite. Therefore, for the time being organic farming needs government support to mainstream the practice.

It can be said that organic farming and organic produce have promising future because of its sustainability and environment sensitive parameters and the present high costs of organic food should not become an impediment. We should rather see it in terms of gains we are making by preserving the vital delicate balance of nature.

1. **Agroecosystem** the organism and environment of an agricultural area;
2. **Agronomic** related to application of various soil and plant sciences to soil management and crop production; 3. **Forays** a sudden attack or assault;
4. **Imperative** of vital importance, crucial; 5. **Mobilisation** act of assembling and putting into readiness; 6. **Biodegradable** capable of being decomposed by bacteria or other living organisms; 7. **Thrust** push, propel

8. **Green-manuring** a fertilizer consisting of growing plants that are ploughed back into the soil; 9. **Monoculture** practise of growing a single crop 10. **Disincentivised** dissuaded, discouraged;

Vocab Card

11. **Restoration** overhauling or reconditioning; 12. **Fragile** breakable, delicate; 13. **Eutrophication** excessive richness of nutrients in lake or other body of water; 14. **Detrimental** causing damage or injury;
15. **Invasive** tending to spread very quickly; 16. **Viable** effectiveness, practicable; 17. **Harnessing** make use of (natural resources); 18. **Indigenous** native or local 19. **Resist** with stand, be proof against 20. **Subsistence** maintenance, upkeep; 21. **Prerequisite** necessary condition.

151 Essays

25

❯❯ 9

Reservation Policy in India

Does it Need Review?

Outlines
- What is equality?
- Caste system in India.
- Reservation policy taken by our Constitution.
- Mandal Commission report.
- The basic idea of reservation.
- The change in the policy of reservation.
- Actual application of the policy is needed.

Two thousand years ago, the great philosopher Aristotle said, "Injustice arises when equals are treated unequally and also when unequals are treated equally". This profound statement is what lies at the heart of equality-a fundamental human right. Every human simply by virtue of being a human being is entitled to equal treatment.

The most significant, pervasive and violent discrimination in our country is the centuries old caste system. It was abolished by the Constitution in 1952 and untouchability was declared a crime. There was a category of people called dalits outside this system who were discriminated and treated as untouchables. They were thus given reservation by the government.

Reservation in India is the process of setting aside a certain percentage of seats (vacancies) in government institutions for members of backward and under-represented communities (defined primarily by caste and tribe). It is a form of quota-based affirmative action. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes are the primary beneficiaries of the reservation policies under the Constitution with the objective of ensuring a 'level' playing field.

The Constitution of India states in Article 15(4) that, "All citizens shall have equal opportunities of receiving education. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the state from providing special facilities for educationally backward sections".

It also states that, "The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of society and shall protect them from 'social injustice' and all forms of exploitation". The Article further states that nothing in Article 15(4) will prevent the nation from helping SCs and STs for their betterment.

In 1982, the Constitution specified 15% and 7.5% of vacancies in public sector and government-aided educational institutes as a quota reserved for the SC and ST candidates respectively for a period of five years, after which it was to be reviewed. This period was routinely extended by the succeeding governments. The Supreme Court of India ruled that reservations cannot exceed 50% and put a cap on reservations.

However, there are state laws that exceed this 50% limit and these are under litigation in the Supreme Court. For example, caste based reservation stands at 69% and the same is applicable to about 87% of the population in the state of Tamil Nadu.

In 1990, Prime Minister VP Singh announced that 27% of government positions would be set aside for OBCs in addition to the 22.5% already set aside for SCs and STs. This was followed according to the Mandal Commission which was established in India in 1978 by the Janata Party government under Prime Minister Morarji Desai with a mandate to "identify the socially or educationally backward".

Now, the question arises whether there is a need to review the reservation policy in India or should continue with the tradition? The basic idea of reservation was undoubtedly superb as it was in all good intent, meant to improve till now the status of those sections of the society which had hitherto been left uncared for. However, as we see it today, the policy of reservation has completely changed in the past few years. There has been unlimited extension of the policy for no one knows how long, it appears as though the policy has come to stay forever and its extension is also as though unlimited, with several more sections joining the band wagon of the classes under reservation.

If we look at the reservation policy in India, we are the only country in the world that provides affirmative action based on individual caste identities. It is a well established fact that reservations are tools of upliftment for those disadvantaged groups who have suffered years of discrimination and oppression at the hands of the higher castes.

We the people of India, believe in the concept of 'Vasudeva Kutumbakam' where we take each and every person on equal terms and also take the path of fraternity into its ambit. The reservation policy in India gave a chance to the backward and downtrodden people to be on equal terms with the other classes of the society. It not only helped them in improving their lives and status in the society but also provided them with an opportunity to represent themselves in various aspects of the decision-making part of society, something which was denied to them for a long time.

Reservations has come up in educational institutions, in jobs, in state assemblies, in Parliament and in every feasible sphere. It will be a wonder if this system is really going to help us to raise our standards in every sphere or will this become just a tool in the hands of a few, to forward their own interests, as has been upto this juncture. The reservation policy has taken only few families of weaker sections and not the masses, in

151 Essays

27

general, in its purposed ambit. If we do not revise this preferential discrimination policy, we are going to see more division, more resentment and more violence. We need a policy which really helps people who are deprived of education and means of better life. Reserving certain percentage of seats in the higher education of institutions and jobs in the high ranks of the government is not going to help to solve problems of 85% of total backward castes population.

The government need to review its reservation policy instead of extending its benefits to the other sections also who call themselves backwards. The criterion for reservation should be totally restructured as we need to set certain definitions straight all over again before we decide whom to give reservation or not to give it at all. If equality is the aim, reservation should be given to people with lower income group so that they feel at pan with the rest of the society.

Economic background must be considered if reservations are actually to help deserving people. The current reservation policy and its persistence is likely to increase the caste gap which is most likely to solidify distinctions in the society producing unnecessary rancour. It should be kept in mind that lowering the standard of education for anyone is not the solution, it is important to raise the standards of facilities provided to people so that they become self reliant and come out of the vicious circle of caste and quotas. Reservation should not be looked at as the only tool for empowering the marginalised backward communities of the society.

---

1. **Profound** intense, great; 2. **Entitled** to give right or claim to something; 3. **Pervasive** extensive, widespread; 4. **Litigation** case, judicial proceedings; 5. **Mandate** the authority given to an elected group of people; 6. **Intent** resolved or determined to do something; 7. **Bandwagon** a group movement that has become successful; 8. **Fraternity** a group of people joined by similar interests; 9. **Ambit** the limits of a something; 10. **Feasible** practical, attainable; 11. **Juncture** a point in time especially a critical one; 12. **Resentment** something regarded as insult or injury; 13. **Deprived** lacking a specified benefit that is considered important; 14. **Persistance** determination, resolve; 15. **Vicious** deliberately cruel or inhuman; 16. **Marginalised** to confine to a lower limit; 17. **Rancour** a feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will.

Vocab Card

10

Is Capital Punishment Justified?

Outlines
- What is capital punishment?
- Capital punishment in different countries.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN.
- Death penalty is against the human right.
- Various arguments against death penalty.
- Different aspects related to capital punishment.
- It is a socio-ethical controversy.

Capital punishment is the execution of a person by the state as punishment for a crime. Over the ages capital punishment has been given to criminals by using various methods such as lethal injection, hanging, electrocution, gas chamber etc.

The question in front of us is "Is capital punishment justified?" Death sentence as a punishment has been subject to controversies since long.

The basic reason is the moral and humanitarian questions attached to it. For this, one needs to understand the death sentence by itself. In most countries, capital punishment is a method of suppressing crimes and political dissent. It is given as a punishment for premeditated murder, espionage, treason or as part of military justice. In some countries, even sexual crimes, such as, rape, sodomy and adultery and drug-trafficking carry a death penalty. In China, human trafficking is also regarded as capital offence.

The question that is constantly debated upon is that when should capital punishment be awarded? What sort of crime or offence would demand a capital punishment? When someone commits a heinous crime against another being, such as, a person who has raped an eight month pregnant woman, then murdered her? Or an abominable thief ? Or should a serial killer with no conscience be incriminated? Some would say that life-imprisonment is an easy way out and it would also give chance to reform the criminal.

There is a huge uproar everywhere against capital punishment and death sentence, saying it is immoral and that it infringes the inalienable 'right of life' of an individual. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is a pledge among nations to promote Fundamental Rights as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Article 3 of the Declaration states that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. A group of reformers known as abolitionists interpreted the life penalty along these terms and reached to the conclusion that the death penalty is a violation of human rights since it deprives a person of his right to live. If such reasoning is followed, then the state should abolish prisons since it violates a person's right to liberty.

Article 5 of the Declaration states that no one shall be subjected to cruel and degrading punishment. Abolitionists insist that the capital punishment should be ruled out because it is the cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. But one noticeable aspect that the abolitionists and most people miss out is the fact of justice for the victim.

In the fight for justice and human rights one generally forgets about the victim's right to justice. What about the psyche of the victim, who has been wronged? If the criminal has a right to live respectfully, then the victim, too has the same right. The person who has infringed another person's right to live peacefully and respectfully should be meted out with similar treatment.

There are numerous arguments put forward against death sentence. The classic one is that society cannot show that killing is wrong by killing. Even Gandhiji said, "Hate the sin, not the sinner". It is further added that capital punishment is a vangeance rather than retribution and as such, is a morally dubious concept.

The anticipatory suffering of the criminal, who may be kept on death row for many years, makes the punishment more severe than just depriving the criminal of life. Some people also argue that death sentence does not deter crime but recent studies have proved that for each inmate put to death, three to eighteen murders have been prevented.

Moreover we talk about sanctity of life. But isn't the sanctity of life of the victim is more important than the convict's life. In our zeal to protect the rights of criminals, we should not minimise the rights of their victims. An innocent's life should be valued over the offender's.

The most common place argument of all is that executing a murderer will not bring the victim back. Justice is not about bringing back the dead. It is about enforcing consequences of one's own action. It is about preventing future misfortune and protecting the life of the vulnerable and about arming the weak.

Some people stress on the barbaric nature of the death penalty as a reason for its abolition, forgetting that the acts committed by the people sentenced is not exactly humane. Moreover, the death sentence is more humane and easy to undergo than life imprisonment since it ends the torture of the criminals in few minutes as opposed to the torture he would undergo in prisons for a long time.

Our late ex-President APJ Kalam in his book 'Turning Point' wrote that as a President his role was to get every case examined and establish the truth against those waiting for the gallows. He also went on to find that almost

all the case pending had a social and economic bias attached to it. In the Afzal Guru case the way the execution was carried out in utmost secrecy led to an unprecedented move on the part of the state, where it was said that in trying to steamroll a morally bankrupt opposition and a media campaign of surpassing banality, the government has revealed both its achilles heel and the cruel side. An Oscar winning movie (foreign language category), 'The Secret in their Eyes' has also outlined the various aspects related to capital punishment.

In the public discourse there is a belief that we hang the murderer, we hang the rapist and we will deter all future crimes. This is rather a consequentialist argument, satisfying the end without an appropriate means. A count where free legal aid is at best a mockery to the system, there is no denying the fact that most of those waiting death sentence are of weaker background.

Therefore, it is preposterous to retain capital punishment. This process in its underbelly is antithetical to the core objective of criminal justice system, to reform and rehabilitate.

It has been rightly said, "Gallows are not just a symbol of death, but they also represent cruelty and brutality, an apostle of primitive savagery; terror and irrelevance for life; medieval fanaticism and modern totalitarianism"

Vocab Card

1. **Lethal** deadly, sufficient to cause death; 2. **Electrocution** death caused by electric shock; 3. **Controversies** prolonged public disagreement or heated discussion; 4. **Suppress** subdue or defeat; 5. **Dissent** lack of agreement, dispute 6. **Espionage** spying, counter-espionage; 7. **Treason** disloyalty; 8. **Sodomy** anal sex; 9. **Heinous** (of a person or wrongful act, especially a crime) hateful or shockingly evil; 10. **Abominable** hateful, despicable; 11. **Incriminated** implicate, involve 12. **Infringes** violate, breach; 13. **Inalienable** absolute, unchallengeable; 14. **Abolitionists** a person who favours the abolition; 15. **Ruled out** eliminate; 16. **Meted out** dealt out or spread out; 17. **Vangeance** revenge; 18. **Retribution** punishment, penalty; 19. **Dubious** doubtful, uncertain; 20. **Sanctity** sacredness or blessedness; 21. **Consequence** outcome or result; 22. **Vulnerable** exposed to the possibility of being atlacked or harmed; 23. **Banality** an uninteresting statement; 24. **Savagery** a cruel or violent quality.

≫ 11

Make In India

Big Boost to Industry and Employment

Outlines

- The background to launch 'Make in India' programme.
- The programme was a initiative of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).
- The Public Private Partnership as the hallmark of the programme.
- The aim of the programme.
- The 25 key sectors indentified under it.
- The role played by NSDA.
- Number of challenges faced by this programme.
- Same programme launched by China.
- Results of this programme in Indian industry.

The government will have to encourage high-tech imports, invest in the research and development sector so that its knowledge base can expand. Research and development will go a long way in boosting India's economy. The government needs to motivate the people to contribute their share to the 'Make in India' campaign. It is only with the collaborative efforts of the people and government that India can secure the title of a global manufacturing hub.

In 2013, the much hyped emerging market bubble had burst and the growth rate had fallen to its lowest in the decade. The promise of the BRICS nation had faded and India was tagged as one of the 'fragile five'. At that time, India was in a severe economic crisis. The global investors were debating whether the investment in India was an opportunity or a risk. The 'Make in India' programme was launched amidst this crisis situation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25th September, 2014, with an aim to transform India into a global design and manufacturing hub.

The initiative was simultaneously launched in all state capitals and in several Indian Embassies. It is a part of a wider set of nation building initiatives and aims to attract the top investors across the world to invest in India. The 'Make in India' programme was a result of initiatives of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) and is a collaborative effort of different departments and ministries. To begin with, DIPP invited participation from Union ministries, secretaries to the Government of India, State Governments, industry leaders and various knowledge patterns to discuss the severe economic crisis India was going through. This was followed by national level workshops on sector specific industries in December 2014.

These workshops brought secretaries to Government of India and industry leaders together in order to draw for an action plan that aimed at raising the contribution of manufacturing sector to 25% of the GDP by 2020. The resultant plan was presented to

the Prime Minister, Union Ministers, industry leaders, and associations. The Public Private Partnership is the hallmark of the 'Make in India' campaign. The 'Make in India' programme aimed at a campaign different from the obsolete statistics-laden newspaper advertisements. The logo of the programme is a striding lion made of cogs which symbolise manufacturing, strength and national pride. The programme wanted to infuse confidence among the global investors, citizens and potential investors in India's capabilities. A framework for the vast amount of technical information on 25 sectors of industry was created. The government wanted to keep the local and global investor community updated about the latest developments, opportunities and reforms etc via use of social media.

DIPP worked with highly specialised agencies to build new infrastructure which included a help desk and a mobile-first website that packed a wide array of information into a simple and sleek menu. The mobile website ensured that all the details to be furnished to the users were presented in a well-organised pattern on the website. The facts, figures, policies, initiatives and sector-specific contact details related to all the 25 sectors were made available on the website. This effort ensured transparency on the part of the government. It was aimed to instil public faith in the 'Make in India' initiative.

An eight member team dedicated to handle the investors' queries will be formed. The response time of this team will be 48 hours and it will address all the key issues including labour, skill development and infrastructure.

The 25 key sectors identified under the 'Make in India' initiative include automobile, automobile components, aviation, biotechnology, chemicals, construction, defence manufacturing, electrical machinery, electronic systems, food processing, IT and BPM, leather, media and entertainment, mining, oil and gas, pharmaceuticals, ports and shipping, railways, renewable energy, roads and highways, space, textiles and garments, thermal power, tourism and hospitality, wellness.

Although India boasts of rich natural resources, plenty of skilled labour, it still low on the ease of doing business. The 'Make in India' programme aims at doing away with the delayed regulatory and procedural clearances. The government plans to give time bound clearances to the project through a single online portal. The time bound clearances from all the regulatory authorities will create a conducive environment for the business. Besides, the government is taking into consideration the skill mapping and manpower demand for specific sectors. This will ensure that right kind of training is given to people across the sectors in order to boost their employability.

The National Skill Development Authority (NSDA) is working on creating a Labour Market Information System. This will be helpful for the industry to source its manpower requirement. The validity of the industrial license under the programme will be extended beyond three years. The campaign aims at parting with the archaic laws, which have become synonymous with the country's business environment.

The FDI caps will be raised in a controlled manner and the red tape restrictions in the decision-making process will be done away with. The government also intends the develop industrial corridors and smart cities, create world class infrastructure with state-of-the-art technology and

151 Essays

➤➤

33

high-speed communication. Better infrastructure will give a major push to the 'Make in India' initiative. Industry experts and analysts have given a thumbs up to the 'Make in India' campaign. But there are a number of challenges that the government needs to overcome in order to make this programme a success in real terms. India needs to be ready in real terms to tackle elements that adversely affect the competiveness of manufacturing. Special tax concessions needed to be given to the organisations and countries which are ready to set their establishments within the country. Although this will reduce the government's income earned through taxes, it will contribute a great deal in enhancing the ease of doing businesses in India.

China's 'Made in China' programme was launched the same day when India's 'Make in India' programme was launched. This was done by China to retain its manufacturing prowess.

This means that India's 'Make in India' campaign will be under a constant comparison with China's 'Made in China' campaign. India will have to continuously evolve itself in order to outpace China's supremacy. Besides, the country will have to address the issue of skill deficit by bridging the gap between the theoretical education and practical industry knowledge.

The Government of India celebrated the first 'Make in India' week starting from 13th February, 2016 in Mumbai. The 'Make in India' week was attended by 2500 international and 800 domestic, foreign and government delegations from 68 countries and business teams from 72 countries. Seventeen Indian states have also exhibited their stalls at the Expo. DIPP has announced that it has received ₹ 15.2 lakh crore worth of investment commitments and investment inquiries of worth ₹ 1.5 lakh crore 30% of the investment commitments and inquiries came from foreign players. Maharashtra state bagged the maximum number of investment commitments worth ₹ 8 lakh crores.

According to financial analysts, India's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has increased by 40% since the announcement of the programme. Companies like Xiaomi, Huawei and FOXCONN (manufacturer of i-Phones) are all set to open their manufacturing units in India. Lenovo has recently announced that it has started manufacturing of Motorola smart phone in its manufacturing plant in Chennai. Oppo, Fiat, Airbus and Hitachi are some other countries that have actively, showed interest in the 'Make in India' initiative.

1. **Hub** the effective centre of an activity, region or network; 2. **Collaborative** involving or done by, several groups of people working together;
3. **Obsolete** no longer used because something new has been invested; 4. **Laden** full of something (here-statistics); 5. **Striding** walking with one long step; 6. **Archaic** old and no longer used;
7. **Prowess** skill or expertise in a particular activity or field;
8. **Outpace** to rise or improve faster that somebody or something;
9. **Deficit** an excess of expenditure or liabilities over income or assets in a given period.

Vocab Card

≫ 12

Cyber Crime

How to Tackle it?

Outlines
- Introduction of cyber crime.
- Different types of cyber crime.
- Victims of social crime.
- Social media's role in spreading this crime.
- Personal data used for mobile applications in smart phone can be hacked frequently.
- People have little knowledge to tackle this crime.
- Necessary steps to secure one's own account.
- Law against this crime is not strong enough.

The past two decades have witnessed an invasion by technology in almost all the spheres of human life. This has led to an increased dependency on technology. Thanks to information technology, the world is making paradigm shifts from the offline to the online domain. Everything from banking, stock exchange, healthcare, education can be controlled and monitored using technology. As there are two sides of a coin, the technology also has two sides to it i.e. its pros and cons. One of the major cons of the technology is cyber crime.

Cyber crime is defined as a crime in which a computer is the object of the crimes such as, hacking, phishing, spamming or is used as a tool to commit an offense (child pornography, hate crimes). Cyber criminals may use computer technology to access personal information, business trade secrets or use the internet for malicious purposes such as online monitoring of another person's activities, unauthorised users who can access their personal and sensitive information.

A person who gains unauthorised access to the system is known as a hacker. Theft involves the download of copyrighted material by violating the copyrights. In the case of electronic fund transfer crime, a person illegally gains access to another person's bank details and this may lead to financial losses. E-mail bombing involves sending a large number of mails over the network in order to crash the server. A very common cyber crime act is sending the virus as an attachment via mails. This virus can be used to extract the data from the system and jeopardise it in some cases.

National and international financial institutions, banks and security agencies fall victim to the cyber criminals. In many cases, they have to pay a lot of money to the criminals in order to prevent the misuse of their data. The social media is driving the world crazy. But, at the same time, it has become a breeding ground and platform for cyber crime. Thanks to the sharing culture of social media,

people tend to share a lot over the social media platforms. This information is used by cyber criminals to extract personal and sensitive information of others which can be misused later on. The imposters create fake social media accounts and post misleading information about the concerned person. This commonly happens with public figures and is done with an intention to malign and harm the image of the person.

In this world dominated by technology, smartphones have become imperative. The smartphones have given way to mobile applications. A large number of private and public sector banks, e-commerce websites, railways and airlines have launched their mobile applications. The ease of operations of smartphone applications prompts the users to install and operate them. With millions of users, these applications are a lucrative source of data.

Many times, the users unknowingly grant certain permissions to the application, which allows it to access their personal information. This gives the application provider with personal information about the individual. So, the user need to be careful while installing mobile applications and be sure of the permissions granted to them.

India is taking giant strides towards digitalisation with initiatives such as 'Digital India'. This necessitates the people to learn to tackle with the different aspects of cyber crime. Although, people have become tech-savvy, their knowledge about cyber crime is limited. The cyber crime needs to be dealt at two levels-one will be at the individual level and the other will be at the service provider level.

People need to be very careful about their acquaintances and the degree to which they divulge their personal information on social media. It is best to stay away and not accept invites, as well as requests, from unknown people. One should avoid sharing sensitive information such as passwords with anyone. The passwords need to be strong enough so that the hacker cannot crack them. In order to increase the strength of the password, one can make use of alpha-numeric values and special symbols. In fact, one needs to make sure that there is never a common password for all accounts.

It is best to refrain from clicking on the pop-ups and unknown website links. One needs to make sure that all the transactions that are done online happen through a secured gateway. One must abstain from saving the bank account details on the websites. The mails which make claims about winning a prize money are malicious and must be ignored. A good quality anti-virus must be installed in the system. This anti-virus must be regularly updated.

E-mail service providers as well as many other online platforms, have started multi-step verification process in order to secure the user's account. It is always better to spend some extra amount of time and go in for the verification in order to secure one's account. The service provider can encrypt the data in order to protect it. Encryption is a technique to convert plain text into cipher text. Cipher text is the coded text and it is only the recipient of the data who can decrypt it using a special private key. In this

way, except for the recipient, nobody can access the information. A wall can be created between the users and possible intruders. This wall is known as the Firewall. The firewall allows the flow of information only to the computers which are registered and recognised by the host. Digital signatures can be used in case of banking and other such industries. These are created by cryptography and are safe to use.

The biggest concern with regards to cyber crime is that it gets tough to uncover the identity of the criminal. A skilled law enforcing agency is required to deal with this crime. The Information Technology Act, 2000 passed by Indian Government deals with the domain of cyber crime. But this act has certain loopholes that need to be plugged in order to strengthen the cyber security. Besides, it is important for the government to create awareness among the people about the exponentially rising cyber crime and ways to deal with it.

There will always be new and unexpected challenges to stay ahead of cyber criminals and cyber terrorists but we can win only through partnership and collaboration of both individuals and government. There is much we can do to ensure a safe, secure and trustworthy computing environment. It is crucial not only to our national sense of well-being, but also to our national security and economy.

> **Vocab Card**
>
> 1. **Invasion** takeover, conquering; 2. **Paradigm** a theory or a group of ideas about how something should be done, made or thought about; 3. **Domain** empire, territory; 4. **Hacking** unauthorised access; 5. **Phishing** fradulent practise of sending repeated emails to extract personal information;
> 6. **Malicious** spiteful, evil-intentioned; 7. **Jeopardise** endanger, imperil; 8. **Breeding ground** a place or situation that helps or allow's something to grow or develop; 9. **Imposters** pretender or deceiver; 10. **Malign** harmful, evil; 11. **Imperative** necessary or vitally important; 12. **Prompts** encourage to say something; 13. **Lucrative** profitable; 14. **Strides** one long decisive step; 15. **Divulge** disclose, impart; 16. **Abstain** restrain oneself from doing something; 17. **Encrypt** concealed data in something by converting it into a code; 18. **Intruders** encroachers; 19. **Cryptography** the practice and study of hiding information; 20. **Loopholes** an error in the way a law, rule or contract is written that makes it possible for some people to legally avoid obeying it.

➤➤ 13

India's Claim to Security Council of the United Nations

Outlines

- Introduction of UNSC.
- Indian Government campaigns for reforming the Security Council.
- The position taken by the permanent members.
- The issues which are responsible as the roadblocks to India's permanent membership.
- Lack of democracy in the UNSC.
- India must modernise its military power to become at par with other super power.

United Nations Security Council or UNSC is one of the six organs of the United Nations, established under the UN charter. The primary objective of the UNSC is to maintain international peace and security. It looks into matters related to disputes and settlements among the countries. The UNSC has fifteen members in all of which there are five permanent and ten non-permanent members. The United States, the United Kingdom, China, Russia and France are the five permanent members. Of the ten non-permanent members, each year, five are elected for a time period of two years. All these years the number of the UN member countries has quadrupled from 51 to 193. Post Cold War, the member countries have been pursuing the expansion of Security UN Council.

India is one of the founding members of the United Nations but at that time it was under British rule and economically backward. With its improving economic conditions, rising GDP, India has been eying the permanent membership of the Security Council for long. A permanent member is expected to provide its support to the UNSC in all aspects in order to maintain international law and order. Though this doesn't mean the member has to possess nuclear weapons, it must have a strong military trained at par with the international standards. The reforms in the membership of the UNSC have to be backed by the UN General Assembly.

In a bid to pursue its membership, India formed an alliance with Brazil, Japan, and Germany to give momentum to its campaign for a permanent seat in the UN. These countries decided to get a push through a United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution in 2005 which initially gained momentum but backfired later on. This move was doomed as a result of many factors. Due to a lack of consensus among the African countries regarding its representative for UNSC, there wasn't a single representation from the African continent. The strained relations between China and Japan is another factor for the backfiring of the resolution. The Indian government has been actively taking forward this

matter at the United Nations' General Assembly meeting, summit level interactions and during the visits of top global leaders and diplomats of foreign countries. The efforts bore fruit with almost 200 members of the United Nations agreeing for the negotiations in the wordings of the document that called for reforming the Security Council.

The UNGA has decided to commence negotiations in the 70th UNGA session. The framework document was circulated in 2015 after extensive consultations, to serve as a sound basis for the next stage of consultations. Different countries have submitted written and detailed opinions, as wells as suggestions, on issues such as regional representation, veto, categories of memberships, working of the Security Council and its relationship with the General Assembly. The major setback was from the US, China and Russia who expressed their opinions out of the framework document. This meant that these countries were not much keen to pace up the discussions.

In fact, this was a shock for India, who had always believed that it has support from these countries in one or the other form. Although the US and Russia claimed to stand by their verbal support for India's membership, there was no sound basis of the same. France favoured the inclusion of India and the other G4 (Brazil, Germany, India and Japan) countries along with a representative from Africa in the permanent council and expansion of the non-permanent members in the UNSC.

Many experts have claimed India's efforts to be futile in terms of getting the membership of the UNSC. But it is important that India along with all the other members of the UN should be more innovative in bidding its proposals. In the bid to back a permanent seat, the G-4 nations have compromised on their veto power, the claim for which will be suspended for fifteen years or so.

India's position on the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its border disputes with China and Pakistan are considered as the roadblocks to its permanent membership. The India-US nuclear deal was bound to give recognition to India's nuclear status, but India's non-NPT status is acting as a major barrier to India's entry into the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

It is the permanent members of the UN who have the power to handle the international security related issues. This lack of democracy in the UNSC has a direct effect on the multilateral relations. In the past, the UNSC was unable to handle the issues of Libya and Syria effectively. In case, meaningful reforms are brought about in the UNSC, they would be helpful in resolving the global challenges.

India's economy is developing at a rapid pace and has an important role to play in the international affairs. India's claim to permanent membership is justified by the fact that Indian army is the largest contributor to the United Nations' peace keeping missions across the world. Besides, India's foreign policy speaks volumes about its ideology regarding the world peace.

151 Essays

39

As a member of the UNSC, it will be able to contribute in a better way to the global concerns. Also, getting the developing countries on the board will be helpful for the UNSC to understand and deal the issues related to these economies in a better way. Although the road to the permanent seat in the UNSC is not smooth, the efforts must be continued from India's end in order to push this deal further.

To conclude we must look at some facts to before we claim a seat as permanent member of UN Security Council. When United Nations was formed, the permanent members were selected on the basis of their beings strong (in a militaristic sense), economically vibrant and capable of displaying international influence. India, during the 1940's would not have met any of these criteria.

But even now India is not powerful enough, its economy is not close to being at par with other permanent members and simply adding another country (and thus adding another veto) would make things very complicated. There is always a preference towards selecting economically developing countries that are more highly developed in terms of standard of living, life expectancy, generally health, education etc in order to provide a certain level of stability and create and maintain and display a certain standard. Moreover India must modernise its military to become at par with military of the other super powers to claim a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

1. **Quadrupled** consisting of four parts or elements; 2. **Pursue** seek to attain or accomplish (a goal) over a long period; 3. **Alliance** a union or association formed for mutual benefit, especially between countries; 4. **Momentum** progress or development that is becoming faster or stronger; 5. **Doomed** ill-fated, likely to have an unfortunate outcome; 6. **Consensus** consent, harmony; 7. **Strained** not relaxed, tense or showing mental or emotional tension; 8. **Backfiring** to have the opposite result of what was desired or expected; 9. **Negotiations** the action or process of transferring legal ownership of a document; 10. **Futile** incapable of producing any useful result; 11. **Innovative** featuring new methods.

Vocab Card

14

United Nations and World Peace

The United Nations is an international organisation whose stated aims are facilitating cooperation in international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights and world peace in the aftermath of World War II, United Nations was conceived as a mechanism to prevent further conflicts. As the existing organisation i.e. League of Nations was unable to prevent such pandemic war, then President of USA initiated efforts to replace the hitherto structure.

The major objectives of UN are, maintaining world peace and security, promoting human rights, protecting environment and ensuring social and economic justice. Through its major bodies, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), International Court of Justice (ICJ), United Nations Peacekeeping etc, world peace and security is maintained. For its efforts to maintain world peace, UN was awarded Nobel Peace Prize for its different agencies and Secretary Generals. The contribution of UN started since its inception in 1945 in maintaining order across the world. UNSC plays a pivotal role in the maintenance of world peace and security.

UNSC has the mandate to carry out peacekeeping operations, imposing international sanctions and authorising military action under its aegis. The UNSC comprises of 15 members with 5 permanent members and 10 temporary members for a two year term. The body works on consensus basis wherein the members enjoy veto power. However, UNSC's functioning has been largely criticised, as one of its five permanent member has always put its foot down on issues concerning world peace and security. The five permanent members of UNSC are USA, UK, France, Russia and China. UNSC with its various bodies at different times have intervened but have had chequered success in its endeavour to establish peace.

After the establishment of UN in 1945 the first impediment that it came across was Cold War which prolonged for almost four decades. Cold War was a tug of war between the victorious countries of World War II to establish their hegemony. The years succeeding World War II saw conflict between USA and USSR. Incidents like Cuban Missile Crisis, Korean War, Suez Canal War, induction of China in UNSC etc were indirect effects of Cold War.

The efforts of UN were partially successful because the two powers never went face to face on the battlefield. But, the acrimony left many other countries bleeding profusely *viz* Korea, Vietnam, Cuba etc. In the subcontinent of India, UN has intervened at different times. On the issue of Kashmir between India and Pakistan, United Nations Military Observer Group of India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was established to oversee ceasefire violations and border control. After 1972 Shimla Agreement, India expressed its opinion that the mandate of UNMOGIP was over and hence it should be terminated.

But UN and Pakistan have maintained that as no resolution was passed to terminate it, therefore its mandate to oversee ceasefire violations still continues. Similarly, in the Sri Lankan civil war which went on for over two decades, UN interventions met only through partial success. The war crimes which were committed had wide ranging human rights violations. UN was partially able to exert pressure for honouring accountability of the parties involved in the conflict.

Similarly, during the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 mass scale genocide and rape took place. In order to achieve immediate ceasefire between Indian and East Pakistan forces, UNSC passed a resolution. However, USSR vetoed, against the resolution to achieve ceasefire as human rights violations took place in a large scale and accountability for the same was required to ensure justice to the aggrieved.

The UN under the leadership of its Secretary General had formed an expert committee to establish allegations of Human Rights violations. War crimes prohibited under the Geneva conventions if proven would hold the Sri Lankan army and LTTE (Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam) accountable. Similarly, some other notable efforts by UN to establish peace across the world has been commendable.

In the ongoing Syrian Civil War, Organisation for Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. OPCW is an arm of United Nations to oversee implementation of chemical weapons convention. The Syrian Civil War precipitated due to Arab Spring. The authoritarian regime of the incumbent President Bashar al-Assad was challenged by rebel forces.

The war got stretched due to backing of NATO and Russia to rebel forces and President Assad respectively. UN played major roles in 2013, preventing use of chemical weapons and in 2015, mediating ceasefire between warring parties. Similarly, in 1954 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee was awarded Nobel Peace Prize for their continuous efforts in rehabilating refugees displaced by war. In 1988, United Nations Peace Keeping Forces (UNPKF) was given Nobel Peace Prize for volunteering to service in war torn countries.

Another major area where UN has been a catalyst for change is in disarmament. Through its United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) office, they aim to achieve elimination of weapons of mass destruction, illicit arms trafficking and burgeoning weapons stockpile for advancement of peace and development goals. Nobel Peace Prize Committee

in 2005 selected international Atomic Energy Agency and arm of UN for its effort to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is used in the safest possible way. But UN in its effort to restore peace has also failed in two missions miserably. War broke out in Yougoslavia in 1992. The war was a result of multi-ethnic strife in the region. The area was inhabited by Muslim Bosnians, Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats.

The secession movement was premised on carving out ethnic based stages of Yougoslavia. The war continued upto 1995 when normalcy was restored. But in 1995 'Srebrenica genocide' led to killing of over 800 Bosnian Muslims as a part of ethnic cleansing. UN failed to prevent the massacre which UN described as the worst crime since World War II. UN and countries like US, UK, Belgium, France were criticised for their inaction in 1994 Rawandan genocide.

Recently through UN mediation conflict were brought to an end in Liberia, Burundi, Sudan and Nepal. UN preventive policy and other forms of preventive actions have diffused many potential conflicts around the world since 1990's. UN Peace Building Fund supports 222 projects in 22 countries by delivering fast and flexible funding.

In the present times world is grappling with Islamic fundamentalism and violence due to multi-ethnicity. Unilateral interventions in other countries by US and other Western powers will make the situation even worse. Therefore, the role of UN with its various bodies is of importance to mediate warring factions. Only a UN backed intervention should be carried out when the world is making a transition from unipolar power centre to a multi-polar world. In these tough times India can play a lead role in ensuring world peace through its philosophy of "वसुधैव कुटुम्बकमा"

Vocab Card

1. **Pandemic** widespread; 2. **Inception** establishment; 3. **Pivotal** crucial, central; 6. **Sanctions** official permission; 5. **Aegis** power to control or protect; 6. **Impediment** obstacle, hindrance something; 7. **Tug of war** a contest in which two evenly matched people are trying to obtain; 8. **Acrimony** bitterness; 9. **Profusely** excessively; 10. **Mandate** directive or command; 11. **Genocide** massacre, killing of large number of people; 12. **Aggrieved** resentful, angry; 13. **Commendable** admirable, praise-worthy; 14. **Precipitated** bring about, lead to; 15. **Incumbent** obligatory; 16. **Catalyst** a person or thing that precipitates an event; 17. **Bourgeoning** increase rapidly; 18. **Ethnic strife** violent conflict in communal minorities; 19. **Grappling** struggling.

151 Essays

❧ 15

Euthanasia

Should it be Legalised?

Outlines
- Meaning of euthanasia.
- Difference between suicide and euthanasia.
- Euthanasia is allowed in some countries.
- In India passive euthanasia is allowed only in exceptional cases.
- The process should be followed in passive euthanasia.
- Arguments in favour or against euthanasia.
- The decision to euthanasia should be collective.

The term euthanasia comes from the Greek word 'euthanatos' meaning 'good death'. It is an act or practice of ending the life of an individual suffering from a terminal illness or an incurable condition. It is also known as 'mercy killing' which is an act where the individual who has no chance of survival as he is suffering from painful life, ends his life in a painless manner. It is a gentle, easy and painless death.

It is basically to bring about the death of a terminally ill patient or a disabled. Euthanasia is thus practised so that a person can live as well as die with dignity.

There are two types of euthanasia namely, active euthanasia and passive euthanasia. Active euthanasia or positive euthanasia refers to causing intentional death of a human being by direct intervention. It is a direct action performed to end useless life and a meaningless existence. e.g. by giving lethal dose of a drug or by giving a lethal injection.

On the other hand, passive euthanasia or negative euthanasia is intentionally causing death by not providing essential, necessary and ordinary care or food and water. It implies to discontinuing, withdrawing or removing artificial life support system. Passive euthanasia is usually slower and more uncomfortable than active.

Before moving further, it is important to note that there is a difference between 'Suicide' and 'Euthanasia'. In a suicide, a man voluntarily kills himself by stabbing, poisoning or by any other mean.

It is an act of intentionally killing oneself due to depression or other reasons. On the other hand, euthanasia is an action of a person to bring to an end the life of another person.

Another major difference to be studied is between 'assisted suicide' and 'euthanasia'. Assisted suicide is an act which intentionally helps another to commit suicide, e.g. by providing with the means to do so.

When it is a doctor who helps a patient to kill himself by providing a prescription for lethal medication, it is a 'physician assisted suicide'.

On the other hand, euthanasia may be active such as when a doctor gives a lethal injection to a patient or passive when a doctor removes life support system of the patient.

Now, the matter of concern is the legalisation of euthanasia. In countries like Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland, active euthanasia is legal. Passive euthanasia is allowed in the UK, the USA and Canada. In India, the question of legalising euthanasia came during the case of state of Maharashtra *v/s* Maruti Shripathi Desai.

After the decision of Supreme Court in Aruna Shanbaug case, 2011, a nurse who was in a vegetative state for 37 years as a result of sexual assault, India allowed 'passive euthanasia' in exceptional cases on 7th march, 2011 after a review by medical experts, while 'active euthanasia' is not allowed. Aruna's condition forced the court to consider passive euthanasia. This landmark decision legalised passive euthanasia, giving thousands of patients living in a persistant vegetative state all over the country, the right to have artificial life-support system withdrawn so as to enable them to end a life of misery.

The court held that there is no right to die under Article 21 of the Constitution but causing the death of a person who is in a permanent persistant vegetative state, with no chance of recovery, by withdrawing artificial life support is not a 'positive act of killing'. Terming this 'passive euthanasia', a bench of justices Markandey Katju and Gyan Sudha Mishra held that this could be permitted on a case-by-case basis.

The court also laid down guidelines for passive euthanasia such as that the matter must be referred to the High Court for a decision and that the doctor or the parents or spouse of the patient must be one of the petitioner for the withdrawal of life support system.

- A special two-judge bench will be formed in every High Court to decide applications seeking permission for euthanasia.
- A committee of three reputed doctors from a panel constituted by the High Court in consultation with the State Government will examine the patient and submit its report to the High Court bench.
- Notices will be issued to all those concerned with the doctor's report attached.
- After hearing everyone, the bench will give its verdict. The matter must be dealt with speedily as delays prolong the agony of the patient.

Even though the Supreme Court gave the verdict for permitting some form of Euthanasia, there is a debate whether to legalise Euthanasia or not. There are few reasons given by those who want to legalise Euthanasia

151 Essays

45

- It provides a way to relieve the intolerably extreme pain and suffering of an individual.
- Article 21 of the Constitution provides for living with dignity and if that standard is falling below that minimum level then a person should be given a right to end his life.
- It not only relieves the unbearable pain of a patient but also relieves the relatives of a patient from the mental agony.
- It provides a way to relieve the intolerably extreme pain and suffering of an individual.

On the other hand, many people are against legalising euthanasia. They give the following arguments

- The human life is gift of God and taking life is wrong and immoral human beings cannot be given the right to play the part of God.
- Acceptance of euthanasia as an option could exercise a detrimental effect on societal attitudes and on the doctor-patient relationship.
- Miracles do happen when it is a matter of life and death, there are examples of patients coming out of coma after years.
- It is feared that if euthanasia is legalised then other groups of more vulnerable people will become at risk of feeling into taking that option themselves.

To conclude we may say that it has now been realised that this method to end unbearable pain and suffering of a being is no crime but it, certainly may lead to a crime if not monitored properly. As far as possible, efforts should be made to reduce the pain and suffering by means of treatment i.e. both physical and mental. Euthanasia has to be resorted to only when all the other options have been exhausted.

The decision should be a collective one, based on the consent of doctors and the patient's closest relatives. After all, the right to live would not be complete if the right to die with full dignity is not available to an individual.

---

1. **Terminal** suffering from incurable illness; 2. **Intentional** done in way that is planned or intended; 3. **Lethal** harmful or very destructive;
4. **Voluntarily** of one's own free will; 5. **Legalisation** the act of making lawful; 6. **Specifically** pointedly or precisely; 7. **Vegetative state** an unconscious state that is the result of severe brain damage and that can last for a very long time; 8. **Verdict** judgement or decision;
9. **Agony** physical or mental suffering; 10. **Intolerably** unbearable or undesirable; 11. **Detrimental** tending to cause harm; 12. **Vulnerable** in danger or in peril; 13. **Unscrupulous** having no morals or principles;
14. **Resorted** to something in absence of any other option.

Vocab Card

16

Freedom of Expression vs Nationalism

Outlines
- Define the concept of freedom of speech.
- The meaning of the term nationalism.
- Freedom of speech has emerged gradually.
- Importance of freedom of speech.
- The concept of nationalism.
- Debate between freedom of speech and nationalism.
- Different incidents fuelled up the debate.
- Freedom of speech and nationalism can co-exist, not mutually exclusive.

"I may disagree with what you say. But I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Voltaire

Freedom of speech is a principal pillar of a free government; when this support is taken away, the Constitution of a free society is dissolved and tyranny is erected on its ruins. Freedom of speech and expression is the right of every person to express his or her opinion, ideas, thoughts on any subject without fear of persecution or censorship by state. The Constitution of India has provision for freedom of speech and expression in Article 19.

Nationalism on the other hand as described by Merriam Webster dictionary is, "A feeling that people have of being loyal to and proud of their country often with the belief that it is better and more important than other countries" or "A desire by a large group of people who share the same culture, history, language etc to form a separate and independent nation of their own." The recent debate in India on freedom of speech and expression *vs* nationalism erupted due to clash of thoughts between for right groups and the rest. The line often gets blurred between Nationalism and Jingoism. Thus, they trample the freedom of speech and expression.

The concept 'Freedom of Speech' had emerged gradually during the European Enlightenment. England's Bill of Rights (1689) granted 'Freedom of Speech on Parliament.' This concept is also inspired by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen adopted during the French Revolution in 1789. In India, the Rowlatt Act in 1919 gave extensive powers to the British Government and the police to control Individual rights and freedoms like restrictions on public gathering, censorship of the media and publications etc. Public apposition to this Act led to the non-voilent Civil Disobedience Movement throughout the country

under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Here freedom of expression became the main issue of nationalism. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and International Convenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) guarantee the right to freedom of speech and expression. The right is vital in the sense that it facilitates attainment of other human rights too. Freedom of expression is applicable at two levels, individual and state level. At the level of individual, freedom of expression allows one to understand their surrounding and the world as a whole by the exchange of ideas and information. People are able to express their opinions freely of these rights are secured and ensured by state. On the other hand, from the perspective of a state, freedom of speech becomes important for social, economic, political advancement of the nation as a whole.

This right enables honest, competent people to administer the state in every field *viz* politics, bureaucracy, judiciary, media etc. It also promotes citizens to put these authorities under constant scrutiny. The result is good governance. It also promotes public debates and discussion on policy, legislations, actions of state. This helps public forums to become a market place of ideas. Similarly, it also enables implementation of human rights. media and public scrutiny of human rights highlights act of commission and omission by state. In these two perspectives freedom of speech and expression is very fundamental for realising full potential of a human being. However, it is said, "Rights are commensurate with responsibilities." Article 19 (1) of Indian Constitution describes the freedom of speech and expression. Article 19 (2) enumerates on the reasonable restrictions on this right i.e. security of the state, friendly relations with other countries, public order and decency, contempt of court, defamation, incitement of offence, sovereignty and integrity of India.

Nationalism, on the other hand is a modern concept. It is an adhesive which keeps the members of a particular territory to identify themselves as a unit. Historians are of the opinion that it emerged in 19th century, thus regarded as modern concept. It is a modernising concept as it facilitates growth and development. State intervenes with its various organs to ensure welfare of its citizen. In this process, the citizens of the state form a sense of cohesion. The binding forces are our freedom struggle, culture, language etc. These forces make us feel pride for our nation.

However, more often it has been seen that in this quest of nationalism and sense of pride the members of state become ultra-nationalist. Inadequate values of tolerance for others results in infringement of their rights. The recent case of JNU, the debate between Freedom of Speech and Nationalism got highlighted. In JNU, in 2016 an incident occured where sloganeering took place, rather jeering which provoked nationalistic sentiments. It was a gathering where students had assembled to condemn the capital punishment handed out to Afzal Guru. However, some elements in the crowd resorted to sloganeering against India, calling for its disintegration. The issue got blown out of proportion due to three reasons. One, sloganeering by elements inside the gathering against India. Two, police excesses and misrepresentation of facts in front of public. Three, media scrutiny and hype that was created. Further more students were

151 Essays

48

frisked out by police on trumped up charges. Also, they got manhandled in court premises in front of camera. All these incidents fuelled up the debate of Freedom of Speech and Expression *vs* Nationalism. In another event in 2016 in the Maharashtra Assembly, a member was forced to chant a particular slogan. Members of a particular community in India need not always show their allegiance to the nation by shouting a particular slogan. Freedom of Speech and Expression also includes right to be silent. Forcing some one to say something is an infringement of this right. Moreover, nationalism is not just manifested by shouting a particular slogan. We follow the tenets of our Constitution in letter and spirit, that is nationalism.

Similarly, when the pot was already boiling, the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Srinagar issue came up. When India was defeated by West Indies in T-20 World Cup in 2016, in NIT students were divided for and against India. Local students cheered for to West Indies and non-locals who outnumbered the locals inside the campus cheered for India. The issue assumed new dimensions as it got connected to political issue of secession of Kashmir from India. Security was beefed up in the campus and made it even worse by presenting a picture of battlezone.

The issue was again on the debate of Nationalism *vs* Freedom of Speech and Expression. Freedom of Speech is essential for our society. It is a powerful instrument for all civilised and democratic nations of the world. Without it our literature, science, art and music cannot flourish. But the Right to freedom of speech is not absolute. It is bound by our social duty and moral obligation. It must be exercised with caution, keeping in mind otheris sensitivities, otherwise it misuses its application.

Freedom of speech and expression and nationalism can coexist. They are not mutually exclusive. However, there are certain red lines to be drawn on both sides. Jingoism or ultra nationalism should not stifle freedom of speech and expression. Similarly, there are restrictions on freedom of speech. These should be adhered to and expressing slogans for destruction of India is uncalled for. We can conclude by quoting Pope John Paul II : "Pervading nationalism imposes its domination on man today in many different forms and with an aggressiveness that spares no one. The challenge that is already with us is the temptation to accept as true freedom what in reality is only a new form of slavery."

Vocab Card

1. **Persecution** harassment; 2. **Trample** to treat as if worthless or unimportant; 3. **Commensurate** equivalent or proportional; 4. **Cohesion** the act or state of keeping together; 5. **Infringement** breaking a law or rule; 6. **Secession** the fact of an area or group becoming independent from the county; 7. **Beefed up** made something bigger, stronger and more effective; 8. **Stifle** to prevent a feeling from being expressed; 9. **Pervade** to spread through and be noticeable in every part of something.

151 Essays

49

✵ 17

Black Money
Grave Menace for the Nation

Outlines

- What is black money?
- How does black money originate?
- Various sources to generate black money.
- Transferring money into offshore tax heavens.
- To tackle the menace some laws are introduced.
- Various strategies to curb black money.
- Making no contribution to the development of the country.

Black money can be defined as assets or resources that have neither been reported to the public authorities at the time of their generation nor disclosed at any point of time during their possession. The menace of black money has not just infested Indian authorities, but has spread world-wide. Black money can be generated by various sources which are both, illegal and legal. Not filing returns on the revenue through legal sources make it black. In India and across the world various legislations have been enacted to counter the menace of black money.

The generated money has been used by their custodians for various purposes both legal and illegal. The recent revelations of Panama Papers are the biggest revelation in this context which has taken in its fold in a powerful way in the world including India. These activities have very wide ranging ramifications on economy, society, security of any country. Government has taken various measures to curb the menace of black money.

In the economic parlance there is no unified definition of black money. Several terms with similar meaning are used widely. All these terms have the same underlying meaning attached to the income on which tax has been evaded. In this case, a technical term associated with tax reporting has a nuanced difference. 'Tax avoidance' and 'Tax evasion' are close terms but are diametrically opposite to each other.

Tax avoidance means investing in saving instruments which offers tax sops to investors, for example, EPF. Tax evasion on the other hand implies not reporting the income (legal or illegal) to the tax authorities thereby not paying the tax. Tax evasion creates the following synonymous money or economy: 'Parallel economy', 'Dirty money', 'Unaccounted income', 'Shadow economy' etc.

Various sources which have high potential to generate black money are the following Land and Real Estate, in this sector for all illegal intents the price quoted for the transaction has two parts: one that will be reported to the tax authorities on which the stamp duty will be levied; two, the cash transaction that takes place between buyer and seller. On the second part the tax is evaded as it is an unofficial transaction, thus contributing to a parallel economy.

Real Estate generates 11% of GDP as black money. Another source which generates black money is bullion and jewellery. Here, also the receipt for sale is not given to the buyer and the buyer transacts in cash, leaving no trail of the transaction. Gold and other precious metals are liquid; therefore people consider them as a long-term investment. However, in the 2016 budget government has made certain provisions to ensure that the transactions dealing with precious metal be recorded for reporting to tax authorities.

Also, government has floated two gold schemes to mobilise liquidity in the market which can also help in checking the flow of black money. Similarly, NGOs are another source which receives very high amount of black money. According to a recent report by Intelligence Bureau (IB) in 2015, Greenpeace foundation received foreign funding to affect the economic policy of coal block allocation of Government of India.

This can have very bad impact on the affected country as the sovereign economic policy is compromised and unaccounted money flows into the economy. Similarly, political parties in India also receive large amounts of black money from various sources. An analyst in a recent TV debate made a very witty observation. The observation was made during the debate on defaulting Kingfisher Airlines thereby linking the election funding issue and corporate debt restructuring. Similarly, another conduit of black money is the education sector including the coaching centers.

The capitation fees charged and the payments made to coaching centre are mostly done through cash thereby allowing the parties, payer and receiver to not report the flow of cash. Some other sources generating black money are: illegal arms deal, drugs and narcotics, kidnapping and ransom, racketeering etc. These sources have very wide ramifications on the security of a country.

Based on the recently revealed Panama Papers it can be said that people have exploited the loopholes in legislations and have transferred their money into offshore tax heavens. Through round tripping these huge amounts of money is laundered and then reintroduced in the mother state from tax heaven countries, avoiding tax.

In the case of India through the Liberalised Investment Scheme, money is sent to offshore locations and then invested back through these tax heaven countries viz Bahamas, Cayman, Mauritius etc. Also, in the financial markets people have been investing through participatory notes. These P-notes increases the volatility of capital market, as flight of capital can take place based on market sentiments. Tobin tax was suggested to keep a

151 Essays

51

check on such capitals. Unless, all the countries impose such a tax it will be detrimental to their capital market, therefore, in some way or the other every country has allowed p-notes. In this way, capital market has also contributed to the flow of black money.

In order to tackle the menace of black money, countries world over and India in particular have enacted legislations. Many associated authorities have been also been tracking black money floating in the market. Here, the role of media is also important as was revealed by the Panama Papers released by International Consortium on Investigative Journalists. The 'White Paper on Black Money' has described institutions currently in place responsible for dealing with black money.

These include: Central Board of Direct taxes (CBDT), Enforcement Directorate (ED), Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC). The coordinating agencies are: Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB), National Investigating Agency (NIA). Government of India has enacted the following major legislations to counter the menace.

Prominent among them are: Prevention of Money Laundering Act, Benami Transaction Act, Whistle Blowers Act, Defense Procurement Policy, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA), General Anti-Avoidance Rule (yet to be passed). The recent debate on Base Erosion and Profit Sharing (BEPS) called as Google tax is also important in this regard. At the international level the role of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is relevant, as they have helped in identifying the choke points where the money laundering process may encounter roadblocks.

The framework which the government has identified with its committees to keep a check on black money works through acts like joining the global crusade against black money; enacting appropriate legislations for checking the generation of black money; setting up specialist institution for dealing with black money; developing appropriate system for implementing the rules and making the personnel able to deal with the menace effectively.

The 'White Paper on Black Money' has identified various long-term strategies to curb black money generation which are as follows

- Increasing incentives for voluntary compliance, this may include rationalisation of tax structure, tax rate etc.
- Reforming the sectors generating large tranches of black money *viz* for Real Estate tax to be deducted at source and incentivising payment made electronically.
- Creating effective credible deterrence by policies reducing the flow of black money.
- The paper advocates for legislating on Goods and Services Tax (GST), strengthening the tax administration, prosecution mechanism for defaulters be made swifter.
- Supportive measures which includes creating effective awareness programmes, effective audit systems, greater accountability and coordination at the international level.

In line with the government's objective of freeing India from the menace of black money and with the intention of providing last opportunity to come out clean in so far as the undisclosed income is concerned, the Hon'ble Finance Minister of India, Shri Arun Jaitley, introduced the Income Declaration Scheme (IDS).

The purpose of IDS is to unearth black money in the country. It is an amnesty scheme and allows people to declare undisclosed income or assets. They will have to pay 45% tax on the disclosed income and will not attract any further action. No criminal charges will be brought against them and their information will be kept strictly confidential.

But after the deadline it is possible that a massive crackdown will ensure, since the govenment has been capturing and collating financial data from various sources. Using all that data the tax authorities will pursue the balck money hoarders. The Prime Minister himself has warned that after the deadline harsh measures may follow.

Black money is docile money. It does not play any economic function. Thousands of crores of rupees lie idle in lockers and benami accounts making no contribution to the development of the country. India, at the threshold of fast economic development, needs huge amount of capital. The government funds are short because of tax avoidance and other corrupt practices by the hoarders of black money. If the black money reaches the government, there will be faster development.

---

1. **Menace** something that threatens to cause evil, harm, injury etc; a threat;
2. **Revelation** the act of disclosing; disclosure; 3. **Ramification** a related or derived subject, problem etc; outgrowth; consequence; 4. **Evaded** to escape by trickery or cleverness; 5. **Nuanced** a subtle difference or distinction in expression, meaning, response etc; 6. **Diametrically** in direct opposition;
7. **Sops** something given to pracify or quiet; or as a bribe; 8. **Bullion** gold or silver in the form of bars or ingots; 9. **Mobilise** organise (people or resources) for particular task; 10. **Sovereign** a person who has supreme power or authority; 11. **Conduit** a similar natural passage;

Vocab Card

12. **Narcotics** an addictive drug especially an illegal one that affects mood or behaviour; 13 **Tripping** light and quick, as a slip or pace;
14. **Laundered** to disguise the source of illegal or secret funds or profits;
15. **Off-shore** in a foreign country; 16. **Volatility** tending to fluctuate sharply and regularly; 17. **Detrimental** causing detriment, as a loss or injury; damaging; harmful; 18. **Procurement** the act of obtaining equipment, meterials or supplies; 19. **Crusade** lead or take part in a vigorous campaign for social, political or religious changes; 20. **Compliance** the act of conforming or yielding; 21. **Tranches** any part division or installment of a large unit.

151 Essays

53

18

Direct Benefit Transfer

Step Towards Good Governance

Outlines

- What is DBT programme?
- Aadhaar card, the cornerstone of DBT.
- Aadhaar card as the financial address of the individual.
- Micro ATM in villages.
- DBT helps to prevent the problems in PDS.
- DBT system creates job opportunities.
- The major challenges of this programme.
- Different schemes under DBT.

Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) programme is an initiative by the Government of India, which involves the direct transfer of cash into the beneficiary's cash account. Initially, the customer is expected to deposit the complete amount and the admissible subsidy is transferred into their accounts later on. This scheme was launched on 1st January, 2013, by the UPA-II Government in order to transform the service delivery in the country. Under this programme, Aadhaar, a biometric based identification system, is used to transfer the subsidies and the cash benefits directly into the beneficiary's accounts.

The Central and State Government's transfer of subsidies happens through intermediaries. This resulted in the considerable diminishing of the originally intended subsidy or the amount, by the time it reached the end user. The DBT aims to do away with the multiple layers of intermediaries in the process and directly transfer the amount electronically into an individual's bank account.

The Aadhaar Card is the cornerstone of the DBT. Aadhaar is the first on-scale Digital ID service of the world, which is formless and paperless. The Aadhaar Card is based on biometrics and takes into account the fingerprints and iris of an individual. As the biometrics are unique to all, so is the identity of each Aadhaar Card user. 'Aadhaar' plays a unique role in enabling access to delivery of benefits and welfare measures. It not only empowers the individual with an ID, but provides a Digital ID which can prove their identity on an online, realtime basis.

The Aadhaar Card is unique and does not change over the lifecycle of an individual, so the 12-digit Unique Identification Number (UIN). Aadhaar is sufficient to transfer any payments to an individual without bothering about any changes in the bank account of the individuals. Thus, the Aadhaar Card is being perceived as a financial address in India's banking sector.

More than 80 crore Aadhaar cards have been issued till date, making Aadhaar the largest biometric programme in the world. The Aadhaar Card can be utilised by enterprises and service providers such as banks, telecom companies etc for improving their service delivery. Aadhaar can also be realised by various state departments, central ministries, PSU's and private sector enterprises to provide service delivery to Indian citizens in an integrated manner.

In case of a DBT scheme, the Aadhaar number becomes the financial address of each individual. The Aadhaar cards are linked to the bank accounts in which the transfer of the amount takes place. The system of DBT runs on the 'Aadhaar Payment Bridge' (APB) and 'Aadhaar Enabled Payment System' (AEPS) which can handle millions of transactions in a day. Around 60.95 lakh transactions have been carried over the 'Aadhaar Payment Bridge' (APB) as on 31st March, 2016 disbursing over ₹ 681 crore.

The DBT scheme recognises the role of the post offices also, which means the beneficiary can avail the subsidy through the post offices. 'Banking correspondents' have been appointed by the Central Government. These are bank representatives who will help the villagers to open their bank accounts. The villagers need to give their thumb impression and after the verification of the requisite details, a bank account can be opened. The banking correspondents are provided with small machines which are known as 'micro ATMs'.

These micro ATMs can be utilised by the farmers for the cash withdrawal from their DBT account. As the money can be procured only from the Aadhaar enabled bank account, it is imperative for all the micro ATMs to be Aadhaar enabled. The Public Distribution System (PDS) of India suffers from two major problems. One is of leakage and the other is of mis-targeting. The leakages occur when the benefits donot reach the intended recipient either due to corruption, pilferage or any other such cause. In the case of mis-targeting, the higher income groups also avail the benefits of the subsidies offered for the poor.

The Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) programme has proved to be helpful in speeding up the transfer of the subsidies and plugging the leakages in the system. Due to the unique identity of each user, DBT has been successful in removing the fakes and duplicates from the system. This alone saves a lot of time and cost. With the post office banking and the banking correspondents coming into the picture, it brings banks to the doorsteps of the users who had no access to the modern financial services. The complete DBT system has led to the creation of jobs and has employed many.

The portability of the system ensures that the pensions and scholarships are delivered at one's door steps irrespective of the individual's location. This is because the authentication will happen electronically through Aadhaar. The major challenge under this programme is to identify the correct recipient. At present, a large proportion of the population has been designated to be falling under the premises of BPL, thus making them the

likely recipient of the benefits. But an uphill task for the government will be to identify the correct and genuine recipient for this scheme by assessing their incomes. The coordination among the different governmental agencies at various levels is another difficult task. The enrolment in the Aadhaar card needs to be universalised and the existing databases need to be digitalised. Banks and post offices need to be linked to the APB and AEPS systems. It is actually a challenge for the government to make all the connecting links work together in a synchronous manner.

In the case of technological interventions, the government needs to ensure foolproof finger print authentication, especially for the manual worker and the elderly. It also needs to take into consideration the real time authentication programme at places where mobile connectivity is also deferred. According to the directions of the Government of India, DBT is to be implemented pan India through 35 centrally sponsored schemes. Post-matric scholarship for SC students, pre-matric scholarship for SC students, post-matric scholarship for OBC students, PAHAL scheme for LPG subsidy, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana, Dhanalakshmi Scheme, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship, Maulana Azad National Fellowship are some chief scheme under the DBT intiative.

PAHAL was the DBT scheme under which the transfer of the subsidy for the Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) was done directly into the customer's bank account. It was launched by the UPA–II government. Later on, the scheme was re-launched by the NDA government throughout the country.

Under this scheme, an individual can avail subsidies for 12 cylinders in a year and people with an income of more than ten lakh per annum will not be liable for any subsidy. This helped to address the issue of leakage and mis-targeting simultaneously. At present, the government has introduced DBT in food subsidies in a few Union Territories.

This programme enables India to leapfrog generations of sub-optimal system and migrate directly to a cutting edge system. The end to end transparency offered by the system is helpful in doing away with the corruption from the society and taking India one step further in the process of its socio-economic development.

---

1. Admissible that can be allowed or accepted, especially in court; **2. Subsidy** money that is paid by a government or an organisation to reduce the costs of services or of producing goods so that their prices can be kept low; **3. Biometric** using measurements of human features, such as fingers or eyes, in order to identify people; **4. Iris** the round coloured part that surrounds the pupil of your eye; **5. Requisite** necessary for a particular purpose; **6. Procured** obtained, especially with difficulty; **7. Imperative** very important and needing immediate attention or action; **8. Pilferage** stealing things of little value or in small quantities, especially from the place where you work; **9. Plugging** to provide something that has been missing from a particular situation and is needed in order to improve it; **10. Synchronous** happening or existing at the same time; **11. Authentication** the process of proving that something is genuine, real or true; **12. Deferred** put off to a later time or postpone.

Vocab Card

151 Essays

» 19

Virtual Learning
Can it Replace Teachers?

Outlines

- Meaning of virtual learning.
- Revolutionised the traditional concept of education.
- Preferred by the students for simplified method.
- Promotes 'education for all'.
- Unable to substitute teacher-student relationship.
- Act as an aid to the student.

In this rapidly evolving world, knowledge is considered to be just a click away. The traditional books have given way to e-books and the brick and mortar classrooms have given way to virtual classrooms. The term virtual learning, stems from the concept of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Virtual learning is also known as e-learning or ed tech.

A Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is a set of teaching and learning tools, which incorporate the computers and the internet as important components of the education process. They are in a way designed to enhance the learning experience of the student. Instant messaging (chat), wikis and weblogs, discussion forums, audio and video conferencing, e-mail, smart boards, online games and activities, internet and computer softwares all come under the umbrella of VLE. This concept is slowly gaining popularity owing to the benefits it offers.

Virtual learning has completely revolutionised the education sector in India. A student is no longer dependent on a teacher and the classroom teaching has transcended the four walls of the classroom. The student has an access to learning irrespective of his geographic location. The student can learn a concept and test his knowledge in the privacy and comfort of his home. Weaker students can escape from the shame of facing a classroom full of students and can work on improving their scores.

Virtual learning thus improves their confidence and provides positive motivation for learning. The student centred teaching approaches of virtual learning reduce students' dependence on teachers and make them more confident. The online courses and classrooms provide the freedom to choose from the given set of topics or syllabus rather than study something forcibly to the students. Apart from this, virtual learning also offers pedagogical benefits like increasing confidence of students, providing reinforcement and positive motivation.

Virtual learning has come as a breeze of fresh air for all those, who found it difficult to relate to the concept of classroom teaching. With Information Technology (IT) taking the driver's seat, the concepts are explained using the best possible techniques which are way better than the traditional blackboard model. It engages young people and provides the freedom of learning at their own pace. Many students prefer online modules over classroom teaching because of the way in which the topics have been explained in a simplified manner. Incorporation of social media like Facebook groups, discussion forums and weblogs help to capture the interest of the students. Virtual learning leads to increased online discussion and further understanding of the topic at hand.

E-learning is especially used for mobile learning or web learning modules of distant education courses. People can access the learning modules on the go. Rural and backward areas, which do not have facilities for higher education, can greatly benefits from this concept. Students, housewives, working people and even farmers can increase their knowledge and improve their skills through virtual learning courses. Virtual learning can thus help us in achieving 'education for all'.

All said and done, never ever can technology substitute a teacher in a students's life. Over the years, the schools have been the learning grounds for the students. Right from interacting with the people and learning the art of socialising, the schools have much more to offer. The students are exposed to different competitive environments which play an important role in the building and shaping of an individual's personality. Schools and classrooms make the child learn the art of accepting failures graciously. During the growing years of one's life, it is the teacher who is always there as a friend, guide, mentor and support for the students.

On the other hand, virtual learning works on the principles of impersonal teaching and minimum social interaction. It offers no face-to-face contact and in the end long-term learning suffers. In no way can virtual learning be a substitute for teachers. Technology plays the supporting role, but it is the teacher who brings it all together. These days many schools are going in for smart classes. In fact, such arrangements will require an active participation of the teacher in order to resolve the queries of the students. Although, the names of such platforms are promoted as interactive platforms, it is the interaction between the children and the teacher which adds to the interactivity quotient.

The students need to understand the fact that the online learning portals have been made easy by a set of educators and teachers who along with the technical people have simplified things for them. These can definitely act as an aid to the student for his development, but they can never replace a teacher. In the case, a system suddenly suffers from some software or hardware breakdown, it is the teachers who will come to their rescue.

Undoubtedly, personalised tech-infused learning is the future of education. The role of technology in a teacher's life needs to be that of her aids. The different offerings of the technology must be used to share some of the

151 Essays

58

responsibilities and workload of teacher. The teachers who are a part early adopter, part integrator and part mad scientist are required by the system at present. The catch over here is that the modern teacher must be willing to take chances and be able to figure out how the technology works, but what is more important is that they understands how it works for each student and where its use is most appropriate. Instead of showing excessive dependency on the technology, the teachers need to incorporate the use of technology in their routine endeavours.

The internet can be used to make the boring lectures interesting and assignments more challenging. The modern technological gadgets should be limited to one part of a teacher's tool kit. The complete arena of the virtual learning is based on the fact that the computers and the internet are used to teach the students. This somehow defies the basic principles of education. In an online world, there is nobody to guide, teach and make the students learn the social skills, which are of paramount importance. Moreover, creation of virtual learning modules is a costly process and requires a team of educators, teachers, graphic designers and technical people.

Virtual learning is an emerging concept which can greatly help to bridge the learning gap and prove to be an excellent teaching aid in the classroom. However, different students respond differently to online learning paradigm. Some students are very comfortable in working with technology while the less techno-savvy students have the problem of getting left behind. The success of virtual learning depends on the individual's personal learning style, flexibility to adopt to online learning programmes, personal motivation and ability to work through problems on their own. Every student responds differently to e-learning modules. Thus, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to use technology to her advantage and cater to the needs of every student.

The teachers have played the role of mentors, guides, leaders and facilitators in the lives of the students. They have encouraged, motivated and inspired the students to aspire, dream and fulfil their desires. This is something which no robot or artificial intelligence machinery can do. This type of warmth and personal care offered by the teacher can in no way be substituted by a machine. Thus, we can say that virtual learning resources can revolutionise the teaching learning process, but they cannot completely replace the teacher.

Vocab Card

1. **Transcended** gone beyond the usual limit of something; 2. **Pedagogical** concerning teaching methods; 3. **Modules** units that form part of a course of study, especially at a college or university; 4. **Graciously** kindly and politely; 5. **Infused** to make somebody/something have a particular quality; 6. **Endeavours** attempts to do something especially something new or difficult; 7. **Paramount** more important than anything else; 8. **Paradigm** a typical example or pattern of something; 9. **Cater to** somebody/something to provide the things that a particular person or situation needs or wants, especially things you do not approve of.

151 Essays

59

➢ 20

Human Cloning
A Motal Dilemma

Outlines
- Definition of cloning and its process.
- Types of cloning.
- Advantages of human cloning.
- Disadvantages of cloning.

Cloning is the process of producing an organism that is an exact replica of the parent. The organism thus produced is known as a clone and is genetically identical to the parent. The process of cloning requires a mature somatic (except sperms and egg) cell from the body of the parent animal. In the case of normal reproduction event, half of the DNA is from father and half is from the mother which induces the variations in an individual and as a result creates the individual, who has its own unique DNA.

The process of cloning requires the removal of a somatic cell from the body of the parent and this cell is the source of DNA for the clone. As the probability of sexual reproduction is ruled out, the probability of variation is also ruled out and this results in producing an exact replica or clone of the individual parent. The cloned egg is allowed to mature into the early embryonic stage before it is implanted in the womb of a female for gestation. The individual who is born out of this process is known as a clone.

There are two types of cloning namely therapeutic and reproductive. The only difference between the two is that the embryo is not transferred in the womb of the mother in the therapeutic cloning. The sheep, Dolly was the first mammal to be cloned.

Proponents of human cloning swear by the advantages it will offer to the humans. Scientists are of the opinion that they can reverse the ageing process, as well as the heart attacks. Heart attack victims can be treated by cloning and injecting of healthy cells in the areas of the heart that have been damaged. This will lead to shortening of the organ donation list and save more lives.

In fact, the chances of rejection will be less in such cases as this will not be recognised as a foreign body by the human body. Embryonic stem cells can be used to produce organs, tissues or repair the damaged ones. Skin, brain, hearts, lungs and kidneys etc can be produced utilising these cells. Conditions such as Alzheimers and Parkinsons disease can also be cured with the help of cloning. Cloning can be helpful in genetics.

The scientists can gather a better understanding of the genes their patterns, and effects on human traits. This could be helpful in doing away with many genetic diseases. With cloning at their hands, researchers can easily clone the organism as per their requirements of research. These organisms could be used for the purpose of research. The process of healing and recovery would also be narrowed down with the use of the individual's own cell.

Reproductive cloning is helpful for the childless couples. The infertile individuals who have lost their ability to produce reproductive cells can experience the joy of parenthood. In fact, same sex couples can have children through this method. The clones of endangered animals can be created to increase their population.

Although the scientists were successful in creating clones from the skin cells of infants and human beings, none of these embryos were allowed to mature. A number of ethical concerns overpower the same. In the case of reproductive cloning, one of the major concerns is that the children will be designed and replicated as per the parents' wish. This will lead to the lack of uniqueness among the children.

This, in turn, will give rise to the concerns regarding the human individuality and freedom. Another important ethical concern is that the children living under the shadow of their genetic donor will always be expected to live up to the images of the persons from whom they were created. Religious groups are of the opinion that cloning is against God creation and nature, as the clone would be created by man.

Cloning research requires a supply of human eggs. Every month, a normal healthy woman usually produces one or two mature eggs. But, in order to increase the number significantly, doses of stimulatory medications which are used in IVF procedures must be given to the woman.

In rare cases, these drugs can provoke a hyperstimulation syndrome that can lead to liver damage, kidney failure or stroke. Such drugs are known to increase the risk of ovarian cancer. In fact, the surgery to retrieve the eggs also has risks associated with it. In case the woman is offered commercial benefits for providing eggs, the value of the human reproductive material is restricted to a commodity.

While on one hand cloning of body organs can be helpful in organ replacement, there is a chance that people may deliberately reproduce other individuals with undesired traits. This will lead to the increase in malpractices in the society.

151 Essays

One of the major concerns in regards to cloning is that if the individuals with identical genes are created, this will lead to the lack of diversity. This in turn, would lower the human race's ability to adapt. There is quite possibility, that the age of the donor could be imprinted on the growing embryo. This may cause premature ageing issues and lead to death.

Almost millions of cells are shed throughout the day by an individual. In case, human cloning is granted an official status, such cells can be used by people to create clones. This could lead to serious implications.

Cloning is a vast subject and it is difficult to find a solution to various issues related to cloning. The risks and possible demerits far outnumber the suggested benefits of cloning. However, restrictions on cloning can hinder important research and progress in the field of animal biotechnology and the pharmaceutical industry.

Reproductive cloning should be banned universally owing to ethical and health issues, but research on therapeutic cloning can be carried out effectively under strict restrictions and supervision. This will empower the human species to reap the benefits of cloning while reducing the risks of the same.

---

1. Dilemma a situation which makes problems, often one in which you have to make a very difficult choice between things of equal importance; **2. Induce** to cause something; **3. Somatic cells** cells from any part of the body excepting reproductive cells like sperms and eggs; **4. Probability** how likely something is to happen; **5. Replica** a very good or exact copy of something; **6. Gestation** the time that the young of a person or an animal develops inside its mother's body until it is born, the process of developing inside the mother's body; **7. Proponent** a person who supports an idea or course of action; **8. Swear by** to be certain that something is good or useful; **9. Embryonic** of an embryo (a young animal or plant in the very early stages of development before birth, or before coming out of its egg or seed, especially a human egg in the first eight weeks after fertilisation; **10. Genetics** the study of genes (the units in the cells of a living thing that control its physical characteristics); **11. Trait** a distinguishing quality or characteristic, typically one belonging to a person; **12. Ethical** connected with beliefs and principles about what is right and wrong; **13. Stimulatory** something which makes a part of the body function more activity; **14 Retrieve** to bring or get something back, especially from a place where it should not be.

Vocab Card

➤ 21

e-Waste

Digital Dark Side

Outlines

- What is e-waste?
- e-Waste having different metals releases toxins.
- Need of environment-friendly techniques to extract harmful materials.
- Method of recycling should be adopted.
- Need of scientific techniques for waste disposal.
- Awareness of the hazardous side of e-waste should be created.
- Only collective effort of all can handle the problem.

We are living in a world driven by technology and the technology is evolving at a rapid pace. The mobiles have given way to smartphones, television has given way to LED and LCD and desktops have given way to laptops and tablets. The moment, a new model of a product is launched in the market, the previous one becomes obsolete. Most of the time, the obsolete stuff is discarded as a waste product. These unwanted, non-working or obsolete electronic products which have reached the end of their shelf life are known as e-waste. These include the discarded electronic products such as computers, mobiles, televisions, washing machines, refrigerators etc to name a few.

The developed countries produce millions of tonnes of e-waste every year. Even worse, the e-waste from the developed countries such as the US, Japan is being illegally transported and dumped in the developing countries such as China, Malaysia, Ghana, Nigeria, Pakistan, and India. The costs of treatment of e-waste are high in the developed countries. It is the relatively low cost of shipment that prompts the transportation of the waste from the developed to the developing countries.

In the developing countries, this waste is dumped into landfills, incinerators and ill-equipped recycling facilities. The local residents, factory owners, and the workers are free to collect the valuable items from this waste as per their needs. Most of them collect whatever is useful to them leaving behind the rest. Methods such as acid baths and burning of electronics are used for the recovery of the useful material. These methods in turn pose serious health issues and can be harmful to the individuals who are involved in these.

The construction of circuit boards, electrical parts such as monitors, mother boards, wires etc involves the use of potentially harmful metals such as lead, mercury, arsenic, copper, cadmium, nickel, zinc, gold, silver, beryllium etc. When dumped

into the landfills, these metals are known to release harmful toxins that may reach from the soil into the environment and cause health issues to animals and humans alike. There are chances that the chemicals may percolate into the ground resulting in land and water pollution. Polychlorinated biphenyls and polybrominated diphenyl ethers are the important components of e-waste and have dangerous side effects.

These toxins and chemicals cause birth-defects, kidney, liver, heart and skeletal system damage. Besides, they are known to have a deteriorating effect on the nervous and reproductive systems of the human body. The burning of the computer monitors results in cancer producing dioxins. The hydrochloroflourocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are present in air conditioners, refrigerators and washing machines.

They are the causative agents of ozone depletion. These toxins also bio-accumulate through the food chains and food webs and cause a serious threat to all species on the planet.

The rampantly growing environmental footprint of the e-waste is indeed a cause of worry. It is the responsibility of both the consumers and producers to manage the growing e-waste. Most of the electronic material has a certain amount of reusable component associated with it. This reusable component includes metals such as copper, aluminium, lead and iron etc. Special environment-friendly techniques need to be devised in order to extract this material safely from the waste material.

The producers as well as the authorised recyclers need to incentivise the recycling model. The producers can enter the recycling chain by providing a collection service and a repurchase offer better than that of the unorganised sector. The consumers have a natural tendency to recover the economic value from their waste and this is where the opportunity lies. The consumers can be provided with financial incentives in order to make them enter the formal recycle chain. They need to be encouraged to get the defunct gadgets and electronic items out of their house. Many companies like Dell, Apple and HP have started various recycling schemes. The concept of 3 R's i.e. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle can play a significant role in e-waste management.

We, the citizens, need to understand our responsibility towards the environment also. We should not resort to the mindless dumping of the functional electronic gadgets in exchange for a technologically advanced model. Instead of reckless dumping, a better option will be to donate or re-sell the items. The regulatory authorities can classify the waste material into different grades and provide guidelines for the decomposition of waste in each category.

It is better some scientific techniques are devised which can be helpful in the waste disposal instead of incineration or such harmful techniques. In India, most of the e-waste recycling is in the hands of informal sector which is not much regulated. We need to provide vocational training to the unskilled workers involved in this unregulated industry. These workers need to be made aware of the various occupational hazards related to the

151 Essays

64

mishandling of e-waste and be trained on the lines of the scientific management of e-waste. The formal and informal sector can be clubbed together in order to provide better waste management. Besides, the producers must try to incorporate environment friendly raw material in the manufacturing of the final products.

People need to be made aware of the e-waste and its hazardous side effects. The government, educational institutes and the NGOs need to come forward to contribute their share. The government needs to come up with strict rules regarding e-waste and their proper implementation should be taken care of. Defaulters need to be penalised heavily.

Special incentives such as tax benefits could be provided to the organisations who take the responsibility for the disposal of their outdated products. The children need to be taught about the growing menace of e-waste and the ways to tackle it. NGOs can play an important role in creating awareness, collecting waste and providing ideas for better waste management.

e-Parisaraa is an excellent initiative for the management of e-waste in the Indian context. Bengaluru produces 8000 tonnes of computer waste annually which eventually ends up with scrap dealers. e-Parisaraa, an eco-friendly recycling unit on the outskirts of the city, is India's first e-waste recycling unit. It aims to reduce pollution and landfill waste along with recovering valuable metals, plastics and glass in an eco-friendly way.

The United Nations Environment Programme created the Basel convention in 1989 in order to keep a check on the rising e-waste menace. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change under the Government of India has notified e-waste Management Rules 2016 in order to keep a check and enable proper management of the e-waste. More than any laws and rules, it requires a collective effort from the consumer, the producer and the government to handle, manage and dispose the e-waste efficiently.

Vocab Card

1. **Obsolete** no longer used because something new has been invented; 2. **Prompts** to make somebody decide to do something, to cause something to happen; 3. **Incinerator** a container which is closed on all sides for burning waste at high temperatures; 4. **Percolate** to move gradually through a surface that has very small holes or spaces in it; 5. **Rampantly** something bad existing or spreading everywhere in a way that cannot be controlled; 6. **Incentivise** to encourage somebody in a particular way by offering them a reward; 7. **Tendency** an inclination towards a particular characteristic or type of behaviour; 8. **Defunct** no longer existing, operating or being used; 9. **Resort** the act of using something, especially something bad or unpleasant, because nothing else is possible; 10. **Reckless** showing a lack of care about danger and the possible results of your actions; 11. **Incineration** the process of burning something until it is completely destroyed; 12. **Menace** a person or thing that is annoying or causes trouble.

151 Essays

65

☞ 22

Police Reforms in India
Must Needed Reform

"We are bound by law to be free, not to be subjugated."

However, in this nation of a billion plus people, where we empower a few to make laws for the country and ensure their enforcement, those few themselves, flagrantly violate laws with impunity. State and citizens have existed based on the foundation of the Theory of the Social or Political Contract given by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Social contract arguments typically posit that individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of their freedoms and submit to the authority of the state in exchange for protection of their remaining rights. The question of the relation between natural and legal rights, therefore, is often an aspect of social contract theory.

It is that point when state itself starts to trample on these rights, police in this case, that clamour for Police Reform gets stirred up. Police who are supposed to be the protectors of common public and custodian of law and order of the state becomes subservient to their political master. Parochial interests, pecuniary gains, extant laws and other diabolical activities are the main reasons for the hand-in-glove relation between politicians and police prevalent in the system.

The Police Act, 1861 remains the central piece of legislation that governs all aspects of policing in India. It is a British legacy which our legislators find hard to cast off. It carries certain characteristics to the disadvantage of the common public : search, seizure and arrest at discretion; distancing and grandeur; authoritarianism, brutality, feudal attitude etc. Among other things IPC, CrPC, Indian Evidence Act, 1872 etc also help in much of the policing function.

The 1861 Police Act came into being immediately after the 1857 mutiny, solely to perpetuate and consolidate British rule and to keep a check on such civilian upsurge. However, to start with, Charles Napier, the then Governor of Punjab was the one who felt the need of a civilian policing system in 1843. Before setting up a police organisation in his province he had two models in mind-London Policing

System and Irish Constabulary System. London Policing System was based on the philosophy- Police is public, public is police. Whereas the latter was meant to exercise a coercive control and perpetuate exploitation. Irish Constabulary Policing system dovetailed with the Indian requirements. This system was later emulated in other provinces also but it gained a pan-India face only after the introduction of the umbrella Police Act of 1861.

Policing, for any democratic set-up is a vital function. It ensures law and order in the society; protects rights of citizens, women and backward sections of the society; nips corrupt activities of the system; provides security at times of exigencies etc. Police doesn't just ensure law and order but is also facilitator of justice.

Therefore, it is imperative that we make the transition from being a quasi-police state to a welfare state, where Policing is citizen friendly and not antithetical to their needs and demands. The cases of violence with religious colours and the police interference to restore normalcy in the area is pertinent in this regard. Another very important aspect of policing is protecting the rights of citizens. Police needs to be sensitised towards women and the weaker sections of society *viz* backward castes, SCs, STs, children, transgenders.

This will ensure that we move towards a society where every section of the society is treated equally and is able to achieve their full potential. Recently, the case of entry of women in Shani Singnapur temple came to light where women demanded their right to enter the temple. Another aspect of policing is weeding corruption from our society. With a torrent of scams in the recent past, it can be said that the pro-activeness of the police accompanied with executive, legislative and judicial actions would have kept a check on them.

However, things have come to such a point that bureaucratic-executive nexus have made such scams possible. CBI has come down hard on the accused by leaving no stone unturned and bringing the accused to justice. Similarly, police paraphernalia is used for ensuring security of vital installations and respite at the time of exigencies *viz* disaster management, terrorist attacks etc.

The duty of police is to ensure a sense of security among the citizens. Therefore, it is important that public places like airports, railway stations, markets be kept safe from any untoward incidents, where the role of police becomes very important. Role of police during 26/11 attacks, rescue relief operation during Uttarakhand floods are relevant in this regard.

However, the image of police is not so respectful in India. Instances of police excesses; custodial deaths; indifference towards public complaints; high handedness in dealing with the weaker sections of the society; insensitive attitude towards women; profligate use of force etc have been irritants in public-police relations. Supreme Court in 2014 said that the menace of police excesses on women and helpless people must be stopped by all as it reproached the recent episodes of police excesses on a woman

151 Essays

67

in Punjab's Tarn-Taran district and on contractual teachers in Bihar. We often hear cases of women not being appropriately treated by the police and their modesty getting breached. Police excesses don't command respect in the mind of public, rather it makes their relation more acrimonious. Custodial deaths is another area which remains a cause of concern.

Every accused needs fair trial and any attempt to extract information by torture is grave violation of right to life and other tenets of Human Rights. Amputation of male organ of Shri Jugtaram in police custody in Barmer, Rajasthan in 1994 is a case in point. Similarly, cases of indifference of police towards general public are appalling.

The reluctance to register FIRs, casual attitude towards pursuing any case without any sense of urgency etc are case in point. Cases like filing of FIR against three students in JNU on charges of sedition and in the same instance, refusal to file named-FIR against perpetrators, when these students were beaten with impunity in High Court premises is relevant in this regard.

Police authorities display high handedness in dealing with weaker sections of society. Policing, far from being the professional imposition of a coherent moral consensus on society is an intensely political activity with policemen often facilitating and participating in the violence not just against these two communities but against minorities, other weaker sections and women.

Naxalism, which today is the greatest internal security danger to the country can trace its origin to police high handedness on weak and the denial of justice. Similarly, in a recent Supreme Court directive, the court was of the view that 'good Samaritans', helping during road accidents should not be harassed and police should be sensitive in handling with these cases. Police brutality is also manifested as the use of force is applied with profligacy.

Riot control requires use of baton or water cannons to disperse violent mobs. But the use of force against peaceful agitating crowd is uncalled for. In 2012, Nirbhaya case force was used by police to disperse peaceful agitators. These incidents instill a sense of fear in the minds of citizens demanding justice.

The approach of the police is of fail to safe approach rather than safe to fail approach i.e. being on the right side of law irrespective of any negative fallout. Police empowerment is another area which needs attention. Bad service conditions, overworked and underpaid lower functionary etc need immediate attention. Taking a leaf from some of the successful police organisations viz Singapore, the Netherlands, New York Police departments may serve the purpose. Delegating and devolving more power to the lower, intermediate and field officials can also bring about agility and swiftness in operation. Training of the officials is largely pedagogic rather than being andragogic. Appraisal system is subjective and lacks scientism.

Introduction of latest technology in policing is also long due. Compstat, biometrics, GPS tracking, smart-gun, visionic facelt system, e-policing etc can be handy tools. There exists a mismatch between the modus operandi of

151 Essays

68

police and the problems of 21st century India. Issues like human trafficking, organised crime, cyber crimes, illegal drug cartel and such other crime syndicates are thriving because of the lax, unsystematic, infructuous nature of police operation. Police start rearranging deck chairs only when the problem balloons to the point of explosion. Police reform is imperative to mitigate such gaps existing in the system.

The government has set up several commissions and committees to look into police excesses and suggest recommendations for police reforms. The Shah Commission (1977), Dharamveera Committee, Julio Riberio Committee, Padmanabhaiah Committee and Kamal Kumar Committe have suggested more than 600 very effective recommendations. The government, however has remained indifferent to the issue and has cited political reasons, large number of recommendations etc for its inability to formulate a Bill for police reforms. The present status is that the government has still not taken any prudent step.

It brings wryness that after so much of spadework done by these committees and commissions nothing fruitful come out of the efforts. There is no gain saying the fact that alacrity on the part of government to bring reform is commendable! The vortex of suffering of the common public by the hands of despotic police and capricious politicians will continue and the Police will keep carrying the tag of "Criminals in Uniform".

Vocab Card

1. **Flagrantly** done in a very obvious way which is shocking and shows no respect for people, laws etc; 2. **Impunity** freedom from any risk of being punished for doing something wrong or bad; 3. **Clamour** an urgent request for something by a lot of people; 4. **Parochial** only concerned with small issues that happen in your local area and not interested in more important things; 5. **Pecuniary** relating to or connected with money; 6. **Diabolical** belonging to or so evil as to recall the devil; 7. **Perpetuate** to make something such as a bad situation, a belief etc. continue for a long time; 8. **Pertinent** appropriate to a particular situation; 9. **Paraphernalia** a large number of objects or personal possessions, especially the equipment that you need for a particular activity; 10. **Profligate** using money, time, materials etc. in a careless way; 11. **Acrimonious** angry and full of strong bitter feelings and words; 12. **Perpetrators** persons who commit a crime or do something that is wrong or evil; 13. **Pedagogic** relating to educational methods and principles; 14. **Prudent** sensible and careful when you make judgements and decisions, avoiding unnecessary risks; 15. **Alacrity** great willingness or enthusiasm; 16. **Capricious** showing sudden changes in attitude or behaviour.

➤➤ 23

Necessity of Uniform Civil Code

Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is a concept where a common code is applicable to all the communities notwithstanding their religion, race, caste, creed etc. Under Article 44 of the Constitution under the chapter of Directive Principles of State Policy it is mentioned that, "The state shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India". The provision has been kept under Directive Principles of State Policy, because it is a directive which the Constituent Assembly foresaw was not implemantable at the time of our independence.

Therefore, the state should strive to achieve an egalitarian society where all the communities are governed by Uniform Civil Code. If the concept is implemented in future it will unite the communities politically, socially and organically. In common parlance, Uniform Civil Code generally deals with that part of law which deals with family affairs of an individual irrespective of their primordial identities.

Laws relating to crime, tax, commerce, contracts etc are uniform throughout the country. But cases relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc are directed by customs and practices of the community. Various religious communities residing in India have their personal laws applicable to each religious group. The preamble of the Constitution is the essence of the Constitution and the idea of India. It aims to constitute India as sovereign, secular, democratic and republic.

Therefore, it is the duty of the state to secure for its citizens justice, liberty, equality thereby promoting fraternity while assuring dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation. Implementation of Uniform Civil Code in letter and spirit will ensure the ideas mentioned in the Preamble to become a reality.

The debate of Uniform Civil Code pre-dates our independence and Constitution. During the British era, they codified the criminal law and civil law. But they kept certain matters away from civil laws as they thought that these issues were deeply interwoven with the religious tenets of that particular community. The Britishers did not want to hurt the religious sentiments of Indians, as they considered that

interference on religious matters was not at all conducive to their trade relationship. Therefore, the 2nd Law Commission in 1933 warned against any legislation overriding the Hindu Law or Mohammedan Law. In entire India there was variation in customary laws even inside religion.

Particularly the Hindu customs relating to marriage differed among different castes. Similarly, application of Sharia Law was not strictly enforced across parts of India. This led to a more regional customary law. These created impediments in creating a uniform law for different religions. Similarly, during the religious reform movement in India, revolutionaries like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar among others were instrumental in weeding out regressive practices in the Hindu religion. Similarly, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was instrumental in bringing change in certain personal laws applicable to Muslims. He said "if the religious tenets of any religion is not in sync with time those tenets should be fossilised."

Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi also said, "wisdoms in religious scriptures are not immutable." These men in their era strived to weed out customs and practices which were ethically and morally wrong. Similarly, in the post independence period, there was heated and emotive debate in the Parliament over Hindu Code Bill. Leaders like Nehru, Ambedkar, Patel, Rajendra Prasad etc participated actively in the debate. However, later on the diluted form of Hindu Code Bill was passed.

Over years many efforts were put into codify personal laws applicable to each religious group. Some prominent laws pertaining to different communities are: Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872; Anand Marriage Act 1909 (Sikhs); Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937; Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1937; Hindu Marriage Act 1955 (for Hindus, Buddhists and Jains). In the Hindu Marriage Act itself there are certain exceptions which allows its application based on region. For example in South India, the concept of cousin marriage is allowed. Similarly, the act through the interpretation of court allows for certain exemptions for tribal customs. The court over years has given directives to state for a Uniform Civil Code.

Some very famous cases in this context are the following

Mohammed Ahmed vs Shah Bano Case

In the Mohammed Ahmed Khan vs Shah Bano case popularly known as Shah Bano case, in 1985 the Supreme Court directed the Parliament to frame a Uniform Civil Code. In this case, the victim Shah Bano claimed maintenance from her husband under Section 125 of Criminal Procedure Code after she was given triple talaq. Nationwide discussions, disruptions and agitation took place. In a serious turn of events the then Rajiv Gandhi Government overturned the directive of Shah Bano case by Muslim Women (Right to Protection on Divorce) Act, 1986 which curtailed the right of Muslim women under Section 125, Criminal Procedure Code. Under pressure from Muslim clerics and conservatives the rights of Muslim women were curtailed.

151 Essays

71

Shyra Bano Case

Recently the case of Shyra Bano came to light when she was given triple talaq. She was forced to undergo multiple abortions for the want of a male child, After so many attempts to get a male child the husband gave her triple talaq. In this case too, the Supreme Court put its foot down and wa. of the view that the custom of triple talaq be abolished. However, All India Muslim Personal Law Board decided to oppose any move to scrap the triple talaq.

Whenever there is a debate on implementation of Uniform Civil Code arguments are given for and against its implementation. Uniform Civil Code is applicable currently in the state of Goa making it a model case study. Here, the implementation will bring a sigh of relief for females. As in all these cases they are mostly at the receiving end, whether divorce or inheritance. It will bring in an era of Indian Legal System with high degree of parity, between different religious groups. On the other hand, there are ardent opponents of Uniform Civil Code.

It is argued that it will impose the customs of majority and will reflect a tyrannical state. It will further endanger unity by creating more ill will among the community. Therefore, it can be said that UCC is in conjunction with Articles 25 and 26 of Constitution allowing for religious faith and belief. Customs and traditions cannot and should not come to preserve of any religion. It should be bound by a unified law to attain parity around different individuals of the country. Therefore, civil matters should be taken in the same law. Only after such change will we be able to attain the preambler goal of fraternity, equality and secularism. This political step will bring about change and will bring in the values of tolerance and mutual respect for every citizen.

---

1. **Egalitarian** based on, or holding, the belief that everyone is equal and should have the same rights and opportunities; 2. **Parlance** a particular way of using words or expressing yourself; 3. **Primordial** basic and connected with an early stage of development; 4. **Codified** arrange laws or rules into a systematic code; 5. **Tenets** principles or beliefs that a theory or larger set of beliefs is based on; 6. **Weeding out** removing or getting rid or people or things from a group because they are not wanted or are less good than the rest; 7. **Instrumental** important in making something happen; 8. **Scriptures** the holy books of a particular religion; 9. **Immutable** that cannot be changed; 10. **Curtailed** limited something or made it last for a shorter time; 11. **Clerics** a priest or religious leader, especially a Christian or Muslim one; 12. **Myriad** an extremely large number of something; 13. **Coherent** logical and well organised; 14. **Parity** the state or condition of being equal, especially as regards status or pay; 15. **Ardent** very enthusiastic and showing strong feelings about somebody/something.

Vocab Card

24

Teenage Suicide
Today's Grave Problem in Society

Outlines
- What is suicide?
- Why the number of teenage suicide is increasing?
- Causes of teenage suicide.
- Ways to deal with teenagers.

Suicide is the act or an instance of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally. Teenage is the transition phase of one's life. It is that time period when an individual witness the physical and psychological changes and it becomes difficult for the young innocent minds to acclimatise to these changes. Over the years, teenage suicide has become one of the major causes of worry for our society. The increase in the number of suicide cases is the result of the rising peer, parental and societal pressures and the inability of the teenagers to cope with it.

The teenagers live in their own world of dream and fantasies that is completely different from the ground realities. The harsh realities of life hit them hard. They have high expectations and aspirations in regards to their personal and professional lives, which if are not fulfilled lead to disappointment, resentment and ultimately suicide. A lot of hormonal changes are taking place in their bodies resulting in emotional distress. It becomes difficult for the teenagers to handle these changes resulting in stress, disappointment, resentment, anger and frustration in their lives.

The teenagers are under a constant pressure to meet the expectations of their parents. Some parents are in a habit to compare their children with their siblings and friends, who are better than them in different spheres. This creates a sense of inferiority complex among these children. In the worst cases, parents treat their children harshly and subject them to physical and emotional atrocities. The children are under continual stress to perform well. It becomes difficult for them to cope with this stress and they eventually slip into depression. The teenagers who are unable to handle the pressure are haunted by suicidal thoughts as they are guilt-ridden and consider their life worthless.

There is immense peer pressure in this age. On one hand, there is parental pressure on the teenagers to meet their parent's expectations in different spheres of lives. And on the other hand, it is the peer pressure to have a happening social life. Socialising, late night parties, branded attires and latest gadgets have become synonymous with today's generation. However, this seems to be against the

ideal norms of the society and the wishes of the parents. These differences in the opinions become the major cause of conflict between the parents and children. This is when teenagers start avoiding their parents and stop paying heed to them. Instead, they rely more on their friends. Many times it is their friends who misguide them.

Teenagers often cannot cope up with the increasing pressure in their educational life. Thus, many schools appointed school counselors to tackle the problem. Education exerts so much pressure on them, that during board examination some students commit suicide. Suicides in Kota also justify this pressure theory.

Kota is a major coaching hub of the country for competitive examination preparations and has a number of engineering and medical coaching institutes. Over 1.5 Laks students from all over the country come here for preparation of various examinations, viz. IIT-JEE, NEET-UG and AIIMS etc. Students live here for 2-3 years and prepare for the examinations. In the past few years, reports of students committing suicide in this city have increased. Students cannot cope with the pressure and commit suicide. They do it as they have the fear of letting down their family prestige or not having any career alternatives.

Teenage is the time when an individual attains the sexual maturity. As a teenager attains sexual maturity, it is common for them to get attracted to the members of opposite sex. They develop more consciousness towards their physical appearance and want to look their best. They are fascinated by the popular celebrities and imitate them. It becomes difficult for them to think rationally and they easily get carried away.

The social media and dating websites have become quite popular among teenagers. These platforms provide a means to communicate with others as wells as provide a sneak peek into the personal lives of people. Sometimes due to the peer pressure and sometimes by choice, they get involved in the relationships. But the fact is that they are not mature enough to handle the pressures of relationships. Unwanted teenage pregnancies, failed relationships and rejection are the major causes of depression which instigate an adolescent to commit suicide.

Each society has its own norms and as the members of the society, teenagers are expected to adhere to these norms. Ideally, a teenager is expected to be good in academics which if not so invites unnecessary criticism from the society. In the mad competition of today's world, the teenagers are expected to be all-rounder to secure a place for themselves in the society.

In order to cope with the stress, they resort to means such as alcohol, drugs and smoking. The end result of all these means is depression which is one of the major causes of suicide. Besides, the children who have witnessed the divorce of their parents, death of a near or dear one, a traumatic childhood, have been a victim of bullying, physical, emotional or sexual abuse often have suicidal thoughts.

151 Essays

The elders need to be vigilant enough to notice the early signs of depression. The teenagers who have witnessed major stressful life events like, a breakup, divorce or major family conflicts are mostly overpowered by negative thoughts. Such teenagers often talk of death or suicide, prefer to stay aloof and tend to lose interest in their favourite activities. This is where the elders need to comfort them by providing them emotional support.

- The teenagers need to be taught that failures and rejections are a part of life and these have to be accepted the way they come. In extreme cases, the parents should not shy from seeking professional help from the counselors.

- The parents and teachers need to teach the children the basics of sex education. This will prevent them from falling prey to the false and misleading information available through friends, internet and other open sources.

- The teenagers need to be taught the importance of life. It is the parents and the teachers who can make them understand that no problem is worth ending one's life. There is a solution to every problem. Everyone tends to make mistakes. What is important is to derive the learning from these mistakes and not repeat them. The mistakes should act as the stepping stones to success.

- Children should join the yoga and meditation classes which promote the general well-being of an individual. These make an individual mentally resilient to cope with the difficult situations of life and handle stress in a better way.

- Each individual is unique and has his own weaknesses and strengths. It is imperative for the parents, teachers and family members to understand this fact. As elders they need to help the children to discover their strengths and motivate the children to work in that direction.

The innocent minds of the teenagers need to be cushioned with the love and care of the elders. Once the children develop confidence in their parents and elders, they would be comfortable in sharing their problems with them. When they will share their problems, their stress levels will also reduce considerably. The elders need to develop a friendly bond and at the same time share their valuable experiences. This will help the teenagers to handle the tricky situations of life successfully and emerge as stonger human beings.

Vocab Card

1. **Acclimatise** become accustomed to a new climate or new conditions or adjust; 2. **Distress** pain; 3. **Resentment** bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly; 4. **Attire** be dressed in clothes of a specified kind; 5. **Traumatic** deeply distrubing or distressing; 6. **Vigilant** keeping careful watch for possible danger or difficulties; 7. **Resilient** flexible.

151 Essays

75

🌾 25

Metro Rail

Mass Rapid Transport

Outlines
- Metro Rail : the lifeline of cosmopolitan cities.
- Metro Rail Projects in India.
  - (i) Kolkata Metro
  - (ii) Delhi Metro
  - (iii) Chennai Metro
  - (iv) Mumbai Metro
- Benefits of Metro projects.
- Efficient Metro system is needed for economic development.

The rapidly growing population, expanding cities, and heavy rush, as a result of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation has led to the need for the cheap and convenient modes of conveyance for the public transport, especially in the metro cities. A well planned Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS) such as the Metro Rail forms the lifeline of the cosmopolitan cities which have a population in thousands of lakhs.

The government must decide the metro model for a particular region depending on the basis of the region's logistics, financial resources, population. It should avoid aping metro models of the other countries. The fact that the metro projects are meant to serve the cities with more than four million population needs to be kept in mind. The costs associated with these projects are decided on the basis of the metro project being underground, elevated or at ground level. Larger the underground and elevated proposal, larger shall be the cost involved. The funding of the metro project is done through the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The private sector brings in the required expertise, technical knowledge and the funds.

Metro Rail Projects in India

At present, India has eight operational metro systems. The Kolkata Metro was the first mass rapid transit system of India which became a reality in 1984. It was the rising transport problem in Kolkata which resulted in the building of the first underground metro in the country. Currently, it has just one functional line and five other lines are under construction. It is the only metro service in the country which is functioning directly under the Indian Railways.

The Delhi Metro has been successful in ushering a new era in the sphere of mass urban transportation in India. The swanky and modern Metro system introduced comfortable, pocket-friendly, air conditioned and eco-friendly services for the first time in India. It has completely revolutionised the mass transportation scenario not

only in the National Capital Region (NCR) but the entire country. The network has now crossed the boundaries of Delhi to reach Noida and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, Gurugram and Faridabad in Haryana. The Airport Express link between the Indira Gandhi International Airport and New Delhi has now brought Delhi to the league of global cities which have high speed rail connectivity between the city and the airport. The Delhi Metro has also contributed tremendously to the environment, by becoming the first ever railway project in the world to claim the carbon credits by the United Nations.

It has helped to reduce pollution levels in the city by 6.3 lakh tons every year, thus contributing significantly to reducing the global warming. The Delhi Metro uses regenerative brakes in the trains which lead to reduced carbon emissions. The Delhi Metro Rail Cooperation (DMRC) has partnered with Google India to provide train schedule and route information to mobile devices with Google Maps. It has also set up roof top solar power plants at many of its stations. All stations of the presently under construction are being constructed as green buildings. The Rapid Metro Rail Gurugram is an underground rapid transit system in Gurugram which is linked with the Delhi Metro.

The Chennai Metro Rail Project is a joint venture between the Government of India and the Government of Tamil Nadu. The project aims at providing the people of Chennai a fast, reliable, convenient, efficient, modern and economical mode of public transport, which is properly integrated with other forms of public and private transport including buses, and sub-urban trains. It is the first elevated railway line in India.

The Mumbai's Metro is Asia's first Green Metro and carries lakhs of the population every day. Bengaluru Metro also known as Namma Metro is the transit rail system in the Bengaluru city. It has both elevated and underground metro stations which enhance the connectivity of its capital of the country. The Jaipur Metro has a double-storey elevated road and metro-track which has been used for the first time in the country. Besides, a number of metro systems are being planned for Agra, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Indore, Kochi, Lucknow and Pune to name a few.

Most of the metro projects in the country are built under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. This is because the private sector can bring in the required expertise, technical knowledge and funds required for the successful building and execution of these projects.

Benefits of Metro Projects

The Metro Rails which are used as a mass transit are environmental friendly than the other public transport facilities. Private vehicles emit about twice as much harmful gases and other volatile organic compounds which are harmful to the environment. The Metro has been successful in reducing the number of cars on the road which in turn reduces the pollution caused by individual cars. Besides, it has helped in reducing the congestion and traffic problems in different metro cities significantly.

151 Essays

77

The metro has led to the commercial and economic development of the country by generating a number of jobs. Besides, the metro stations and corridors offer a business opportunity for different players. A large number of metro stations provide the site for advertisements. The metro stations offer different a large number of food joints, shopping outlets and other such recreational spots. Most of the business houses prefer setting up their offices near to the metro. This increases the connectivity and reduces the effective travel time for their employees, indirectly leading to improved productivity. The capacity of metro rail is much more than the other public transport.

This helps in saving the resources such as fuel and energy which are spent on the transportation of the public from one end to the other. Metro has high speed, halts at specific stations and thus saves the time to a large extent. Besides it is pocket friendly and doesn't compromise on the comfort factor. All members of the society irrespective of their financial status, religion or caste are able to travel which enhances the social integrity of the country. It is a blessing for those individuals who are unable to drive.

The availability of the limited infrastructure for the public transport calls for the government to invest in the metro rail projects. The government needs to provide incentives and special benefits to attract the private sector players and the multi nationals to invest in our country. Besides, the attention should be on promoting the use of sustainable and renewable sources of energy in the construction of these projects. A rapid and efficient metro system in India will significantly contribute to the overall economic development of the country.

---

1. **Cosmopolitan** having people from many different parts of the world;
2. **Aping** imitating; 3. **Transit** the carrying of people from one place to another; 4. **Ushering** show or guide; 5. **Swanky** stylishly luxurious and expensive; 6. **Elevated** situated or placed higher than the surrounding area; 7. **Congestion** overcrowding; 8. **Integrity** the state of being whole and undivided.

Vocab Card

» 26

Judicial Activism in India

Outlines
- The meaning of judicial activism
- Scope of judicial activism in Indian Constitution.
- The history of judicial activism in India.
- Criticism against judicial activism.
- The causes of judicial activism in India.
- Supreme Court's directions to control judicial activism.

The term 'Judicial activism' was coined for the first time by Arthur Schlesinger Jr in his article 'The Supreme Court : 1947', published in Fortune magazine in 1947. Though the history of judicial activism dates back to 1803 when the concept of judicial review was evolved by Chief Justice Marshall in celebrated case of Marbury *vs* Madison. The emergence of judicial review gave birth to a new movement which is known as judicial activism.

Judicial activism refers to a philosophy of judicial decision-making whereby judges allow their personal views about public policy, among other factors, to guide their decisions. The Constitution of India divides the powers to the government into three branches i.e. legislature, executive and judiciary. It is when the judiciary steps into the shoes of the executive and the legislature and embarks on the work of law making rather than interpreting laws, it is deemed to be judicial activism.

Unlike American Constitution, Indian Constitution itself provides scope or space for emergence of judicial activism by virtue of Articles 13, 32, 226, 141 and 142. Article 13 conferred wide power of judicial review to the Apex Court. Article 32 and Article 226 makes the Supreme Court and High Court respectively as the protector and guarantor of the Fundamental Rights. Article 141 indicates that the power of the Supreme Court is to declare the law and not enact it, but in the course of its function to interpret the law, it alters the law. Article 142 enables the Supreme Court in exercise of its jurisdiction to pass such order or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it.

The causes which gives rise to judicial activism includes expansion of rights of hearing in the administrative process, excessive delegation without limitation, expansion of judicial review over administration, promotion of open government, indiscriminate exercise of contempt power, exercise of jurisdiction when non-exist, over extending the standard rules of interpretation in its search to achieve economic, social and educational objectives and passing of orders which are unworkable.

The term judicial activism was explained and recognised by the Supreme Court in Golaknath's case wherein the court laid down the judicial principle of prospective overruling by giving wider beneficial interpretation of Article 13 of the Constitution. But in real sense, the history of judicial activism in India began in late seventies with the introduction of Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

The concept of PIL in India was started by justice Krishna Iyer and justice PN Bhagwati. The term 'Public Interest Litigation' means any litigation conducted for the benefit of public or for removal of some public grievance. In simple words, it means any public-spirited citizen can move the court for the public cause by filing a petition in the Supreme Court.

The concept of PIL is in consonance with the principles enshrined in Article 39A of the Constitution of India to protect and deliver prompt social justice with the help of law. Justice Bhagwati in SP Gupta *vs* Union of India case 1981 (judges transfer case) firmly established the validity of the Public Interest Litigation.

The famous case of judicial Activism in India is the majority judgement in the Keshavananda Bharati case (the Fundamental Rights case). Further the case of National Human Rights Commission *vs* State of Arunachal Pradesh, 2G Spectrum case 2012 are important of judicial activism.

If we look at the decision given by the Supreme Court in several PIL, it is evident that most of the PIL extends to environmental pollution, convicted prisoners under trials, personal liberty, corruption etc. The court has given several important directions to the executive as well as to the legislature at the instance of the PIL.

That the PIL strategy is a status-quo approach of the court to avoid any change in the system. Another criticism is that judicial activism is coming in between the concept of separation of power.

It is also believed that the PIL will further aggravate the issue of pending cases in the court. According to another view, the misuse of PIL has reached ridiculous stage and petitions are filed over petty issues like student-teacher strike, shortage of buses, painting of road signs and so on.

Judicial activism in India, in its truest sense, dates back to the commencement of the Constitution. Hence, the study of judicial activism in India from the historical perspective is confined from the period-1950 to 1977, the period of 1978 onwards being the post-emergency era or the present perspective.

Judicial activism has risen mainly due to the failure of the executive and legislatures to act. Secondly, it has arisen also due to the fact that there is a doubt that the legislature and executive have failed to deliver the goods.

Thirdly, it occurs because the entire system has been plagued by ineffectiveness and inactiveness. The violation of basic human rights has also led to judicial activism. Finally, due to the misuse and abuse of some of the provisions of the Constitution, judicial activism has gained significance.

During the past decade, many instances of judicial activism have gained prominence. Bhopal gas tragedy and the Jessica Lal murder case are among the top two. The latter was open and shut case for all. Money and muscle power tried to win over the good. But lately, it was with the help of judicial activism that the case came to a strong decision.

In the 1980s, two remarkable developments in the Indian legal system provided a strong impetus to judicial activism in India. There was a broadening of existing environmental laws in the country and judicial activity through public interest litigation began in earnest in India.

In view of allegation and to prevent 'judicial activism' being converted into 'judicial overreach', the Supreme Court issued the following directions

- The court must encourage genuine and bonafide PIL and effectively discourage and curb the PIL filed for extraneous considerations.
- The court should prima facie verify the credentials of the petitioner before entertaining a PIL.
- The court should be fully satisfied that substantial public interest is involved before entertaining the petition.

In a nutshell, the power of judicial review is recognised as a part of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution. The activist role of the judiciary is implicit in the said power. Judicial activism is absolutely necessary for democracy because without an alert and enlightened judiciary, the democracy will be reduced to an empty shell. When our chosen representatives have failed to give us a welfare state, let it spring from the judiciary. Only thing the judiciary must keep in mind is that while going to deliver justice to common man, it must not overstep the limitations prescribed by sacrosant, i.e. the Constitution.

Vocab Card

1. **Embark** begin a course of action; 2. **Deemed** regard or consider in a specified way; 3. **Delegation** the act of empowering to act for another; 4. **Litigation** process or taking legal action; 5. **Grievance** injustice, offence; 6. **Consonance** agreement, harmony; 7. **Enshrined** incorporated; 8. **Status-quo** the existing state of affairs; 9. **Aggravate** make (a problem, injury or offence) worse or more serious; 10. **Petty** of little importance, trivial; 11. **Commoncement** beginning, starting point; 12. **Plagued** cause continual trouble or distress to; 13. **Prominence** the state of being important or noticeable; 14. **Impetus** something that makes a process or activity happen or happen more quickly.

❧ 27

Medical Tourism
A New Trend in Tourism

Outlines
- What is medical tourism?
- Countries famous for medical tourism.
- The most popular treatments sought in India.
- Privat players in the field of medical tourism.
- Patients come to India particularly for some specific purposes.
- Commercial surrogacy, organ-cell-tissue plantations are thriving medical practice in India.
- Important steps taken by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to promote India.

Tourism combined with visit for medical treatment is called as Medical Tourism. It is often used synonymously with health tourism, but these two are different. Health tourism indicates travel for taking rejuvenation and alternative therapies and spas. But in medical tourism, people live in one country travels to another country to receive medical, surgical or transplant care. Medical tourism is a new form of tourism becoming popular in the current world. Today healthcare and tourism industries are among the largest industries in the world.

The countries famous for medical tourism include Greece, South Africa, Jordan, India, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. India is later entrant into the medical tourism but there is a significant growth in medical tourism. The growth rate is 30 per cent in 2015. The earlier trend of people travelling from third world countries to major developed countries in the West has now changed. The standard of medical treatment and hospital facilities provided to patients have significantly improved in India. In most of the developed countries, patients have to wait for a long time to get treatment and this medical treatment is very costly. Thus, countries like India has become preferred destination for medical tourism.

As medical visa is difficult to procure and the procedure is a long drawn one, the patient usually travels on a tourist visa and receives medical aid. The most popular treatments sought in India by medical tourists are alternative treatments like, ayurveda, yoga, naturopathy etc bone-marrow transplant, cardiac by-pass surgery, eye surgery, orthopaedic surgery; fertility treatment and commercial surrogacy.

In India, the boost to the health care service was given when AYUSH was institutionalised in our country into a ministry. AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) is traditional Indian medicine practiced far and wide in India. The practice of Yoga has earned fame world wide. In order to learn Yoga and take its benefit people travel from all over the world.

India remains the best destination for alternative medicine practitioners from all over the world.

In India medical tourism is growing rapidly. After Singapore and Thailand, India may be the next multimillion dollar Asian medical industry. Apollo hospitals group, Wockhardt, Escorts, Fortis, Hinduja and Beach Candy are some of the names in healthcare that have come forward to tie up with tourism industry players like Hyatt, Kuoni, Indian Airlines etc. Thus, a substantial number of foreigners are coming to India to avail themselves quality medical treatment at a cost much lower than other countries in the world.

The patients come to India particularly for cardiac surgery, joint replacement, opthalmology, pathology and Indian systems of medicine etc. India is known in particular for heart surgery, hip resurfacing etc. All medical examination and treatment are conducted using the latest technology. Already 21 Indian hospitals have been accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI) which is the world central body for accreditation for hospitals, headquartered in the USA. Its accreditation is considered a gold standard for healthcare.

Now-a-days one of the most thriving medical practice in India is commercial surrogacy. The foremost reason for this is lack of legislation in this field. The Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, 2013 has been pending for quite a while and it has not been presented in the Indian Parliament. Other factors which makes India a hotspot is because of availability of medical infrastructure, potential surrogates and international demand for the same.

Another area of medical tourism is related to fertility or reproductive system. Some favourite destinations for couple seeking fertility treatments are Israel, USA and India. India has some of the most relaxed regulations on fertility treatment (allowing treatments for women up to 55 years) and has been attracting tourists for many years specialised clinics throughout India are well established and have high standard to treat the childless couples. Different types of treatment to cure fertility problems also involves some socio-ethical dilemmas.

Organ, cell and tissue plantation is another area of medical tourism in Asian countries. The obvious reasons are poverty, very high population, potential donor. The legislation called the Transplantation of Human Organ (THO) Act was passed in India in 1944 to streamline organ donation and transplantation activities. The act accepted brain death as a form of death and made the sale of organs a punishable offence. Despite the THO legislation, organ commerce and kidney scandals are regularly reported in the Indian media. Organ donation and transplantation also involve legal and ethical issues.

In case of medical tourism, internet has made available all relevant information related to hospitals and the treatments offered by them. People can easily select their destination based on the information and facilities offered. Chennai has been called India's health capital because of its best

151 Essays

83

quality hospitals and doctors. Chennai gets about 45% of the total foreign medical tourists coming to India for treatment. Many hospitals have tied up with hotels and resorts in Mahaballipuram for post treatment stay and follow-up consultation. In Maharashtra, the FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and the Medical Tourism Council of Maharashtra has taken a joint initiative to promote medical tourism.

Government of India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Tourism have jointly formed a task force to promote India as a health destination for persons across the world to enjoy India's health care expertise. For this, streamlining of immigration process for medical visitors is very necessary. In this connection the Government of India has introduced a new category of Medical Visa (M-Visa) which can be given for specific period to foreign tourists coming to India for medical treatment.

The flow of medical tourists to India has benefitted the hotel industry very much. Star hotels have reported increased room bookings from medical tourists especially in New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai cities. Needless to say that the growth of medical tourism in India has created many job opportunities in the hospital, hotel and travel sectors in order to provide professional service for the foreign tourists who are in need of specialised service.

Globalisation has boosted the flow of many foreign tourists from other countries due to the excellent standards of hospitals and availability of best specialist doctors and good English speaking nurses, hospitals staff and guides in our country. The hotel and tour packages offered by the hospitals is an added advantage. There are some challenges faced by Indian medical industry, *viz*, no post treatment care possible when required, inequalities in government and private hospitals, poor power supply even to hospitals, no industry standards followed in hospitals, brain drain from government sector to private sector etc.

Despite all these problems, Indian medical tourism can reach the number one position by numbers of foreign medical tourists arrival and foreign exchange earning by near future if the good standards of service are maintained. It has a great contribution to the country's economical growth as well.

---

1. Entrant a person who has recently joined a profession, university etc.;
2. Naturopathy a system for treating diseases or conditions using natural foods, herbs and various other techniques, rather than artificial drugs; **3. Practitioner** a person who works in a profession, especially medicine or law; **4. Accredit** give credit to (someone) for something; **5. Thriving** to become and continue to be successful, strong etc; **6. Dilemma** a situation which makes problems, often one in which you have to make a very difficult choice between things of equal importance.

Vocab Card

151 Essays

84

28

Drone Technology

Is it a Substitute for Manned Aircrafts?

Drones are the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) controlled by a pilot on the ground or with the help of technology. It may be as small as a radio-centred toy helicopter or as big as a global hawk. They can be considered as the eyes in the sky which keep a check throughout. Drones are normally used in the situations where manned flight is considered too risky or difficult. A typical unmanned aircraft is made of light composite materials to reduce weight and increase its maneuverability. This composite material's strength allows military drones to cruise at extremely high altitudes.

These materials are highly complex composites which can absorb vibration and decrease the production of the noise. An unmanned aerial vehicle system has two parts, the drone itself and the control system. The nose of the unmanned aerial vehicle is where all the sensors and navigation systems are present. The rest of the body is light weight. Drones can be controlled by the remote control system or a ground cockpit. Drones are equipped with state of the art technology such as infra-red cameras, GPS and laser. Some drones have the Radar Positioning and Return Home feature. The flight radar displays the current position and location of the drone in the context of the pilot. When the drone crosses the control range of the remote control, its system automatically triggers the 'Return Home' feature. This means that the UAV will automatically fly back to its takeoff point and land safely.

In order to take flight, drones require a controller, which is something that the pilot uses to launch, land and navigate. Controllers can take many forms, from gamepad-like controllers to smartphones and tablets. Regardless of how they look, controllers need to communicate with the drone, and this is typically done using the radio waves. Normally, the drones are run by 2.4 gigahertz radio waves.

However, there are many drone-controllers which use Wi-Fi to communicate with their aircraft. This is transmitted on the 2.4 gigahertz spectrum and is something that smartphones and tablets can tap into without any accessories. There is a GPS chip inside the aircraft which relays the drone's location to the controller. It helps to hold the drone within the proper x and z axes, correcting its course when stiff winds blows around it and make it move away from its path. GPS helps to keep a log of the aircraft's takeoff spot in case it needs to return unassisted. When it comes to flying, there are onboard sensors which keep drones aloft. An altimeter lets the drone know what altitude it is at.

Landing is more challenging in the case of drones. Drones are programmed to automatically land slowly, a necessity for the propeller-based craft. When a drone descends quickly, they are bound to get stuck in the vortex ring state. This is because when they drop in altitude too quickly, they end up sinking into the wash of their own propellers. This vacuum of air is hard to escape even for seasoned pilots in the real helicopters, because when they throttle up to escape, they create an even stronger vacuum that pulls the aircraft down even faster. The drones which fly indoors or somewhere without GPS have the camera that creates a real-time map of the ground below, identifying a grid where it can plot points and safe places to land. If the drone drifts away from the points, it can visually triangulate to correct itself and stay locked in position. Meanwhile, the ultrasonic sensors tell the drone how close it is to the ground. In other words, even in harsh terrain, technology can make landing a drone look easy. Such features help the drone to achieve autonomy.

Applications of Drone Technology

- **Defence** Drones are used for conducting photography, surveillance and spying operations. Armed drones are used for the assassination of terrorists and the anti-social elements. Many defence forces use the drones as aerial targets to combat training of human pilots.
- **Commercial Aerial Surveillance** Air-surveillance of large areas is possible with the low cost drones. The surveillance applications include livestock monitoring, wildfire mapping, pipeline security, home security, road patrol and antipiracy. UAVs in commercial aerial surveillance are expanding with the advent of automated object detection.
- **Journalism** Some of the journalists have used drones for gathering news and covering disasters such as typhoons.
- **Law Enforcement** Many police departments across the world have procured drones to maintain law and order. There are unarmed surveillance drones which are helpful to monitor movements of armed groups in the region and protect the civilian population more effectively.
- **Search and Rescue** UAVs are helpful in the search and rescue after the hurricanes and other natural calamities. UAVs have been tested as airborne lifeguards, locating distressed swimmers using thermal cameras and dropping life preservers to swimmers.

151 Essays

86

- **Scientific Research** Drones are useful in accessing areas that are too dangerous for manned aircraft. The US National Ocean and Atmospheric administration started using Aerosonde unmanned aircraft as a hurricane hunter. The Aerosonde system provides measurements from closer to the waters surface than before.
- **Conservation** The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) started using the UAVs to aid the conservation efforts. Drones have been successful in the documentation of animals as sea cull and combat rhinoceroses poaching.
- **Archaeology** Archaeologists have used drones to speed up survey work and protect sites from squatters, builders and miners. Small drones helped researchers produce three-dimensional models of sites instead of the usual flat maps and in less time.
- **Cargo Transport** UAVs can transport medicines and medical specimens into and out of inaccessible regions. Amazon is planning to start using the drones for its delivery services under the name 'Amazon Prime Air' in the US.
- **Agriculture** UAVs are becoming an invaluable tool for the farmers in aspects of farming, such as monitoring livestock, crops and water levels. The images, generated with a near-IR sensor can provide detailed information on crop health, help in improving yield and reducing input cost. Sophisticated drones have also been used to create 3D images of the landscape to plan for future expansions and upgrading.

Drones in India

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is working on remotely pilot Rustom Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) in the Medium Altitude, Long Endurance category with prospects for an armed version to evolve. The Rustom has three versions namely; Rustom-I, the high altitude Rustom H and the armed Rustom-II. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) plans to register all civil unmanned aircraft and issue permits for operating for them. All the unmanned aircraft intended to be operated in India will require a Unique Identification Number (UIN) issued from DGCA. The draft guidelines issued by DGCA says that the license to issue can be granted only to a citizen of India or a company that it is registered in India does its business here.

Undoubtedly, drone technology is another example of the rapid technological development taking place in the world. But looking at the safety and ethical concerns related to it, the regulatory authorities need to be stringent and lay down strict rules and regulations for the use of the Unmanned Vehicles and drone technology for different purposes.

Vocab Card
1. **Aerial** existing, happening or operating in the air;
2. **Maneuverability** the quality of being able to sail close to the wind; 3. **Cruise** journey; 4. **Assassination** to murder or to kill;
5. **Malicious** spiteful or killing; 6. **Vortex** a whirling mass of fluid or air, especially a whirlpool or whirlwind.

151 Essays

✺ 29

Relevance of Gandhian Principles in Today's Time

Gandhian principles or value system is something that stirred the entire India at one point of time. It ignited a revolution, that took the whole of nation in its stride and lasted till we were able to force the Britishers to leave India. This value system gave the nation the principles of truth, non-violence, satyagrah which paved way to people's heart. We are still awed by the uniqueness of Gandhiji's principled approach. He endorsed simple living and high thinking while practising.

Gandhiji preached 'truth' or 'satya' which made us not to withstand a lie. He preached 'Satyagrah' and in fact rallied a desperate mass of people with him all over the country. This helped the British empire to think about leaving India. This methodology appealed to the conscience of mankind and was based on the assumption that peaceful protests are a very powerful tool.

If the question is asked whether Gandhian principles are relevant even today? The answer is yes, to some extent they are relevant and are followed not only in India but also by many leaders all over the world. In Indian context, principle of Satyagrah still holds good. Example is Jessica Lal's case. Through peaceful protest in the form of candle march almost all over the country justice was delivered. Even India's foreign policy is based on peaceful co-existence and it is reflected in not indulging in aggression first though India remains prepared as the security threats accumulate.

We must remember that Gandhiji was a strategist, a genius and he moulded his movement according to the situation. He could visualise the mood of the nation and strategically took each step in a well defined way. So our politicians can learn a lot about strategisation from Gandhiji.

So, there is need to understand that same set of principles are very much relevant. Just that they have to be moulded according to the present times and its requirements.

Gandhiji's views about sanitation or decentralisation of power or women empowerment or need for basic education for all, every views holds good and is followed presently. Make in India is nothing but self-sufficiency as emphasised by Gandhiji. Individuality and economic independence were two things very close to Gandhiji's heart. Present trends indicate the best times when both these are at their prime.

Women empowerment was one of Gandhiji's main goals. Today Indian women are forerunners in about every field. Today Indian women have international presence whether it is space or sports. Gandhiji's dream of creating a global India, a country which encompasses technical and intellectual advancements and maintain its identity is blooming true day by day. Today be it IT, medicine or research, India is upgrading its skill to remain in limelight. Indian brains are sought after everywhere.

Gandhiji forever believed that there is no better teacher than life itself. He maintained that no child can be forced to study but should find the inclination to do so, education today is based on these ideas only. Environmental consciousness, moral values, intra-personal skills, community and society oriented awareness are all inculcated in young minds through education.

Even outside India, Gandhian principles hold relevance and are followed by eminent leaders. The phenomenal success, Gandhiji registered in far away South-Africa fighting for human rights and civil liberties has great significance and later his teachings were adopted by Nelson Mandela, the great South African freedom fighter. Dr Martin Luther King was very much inspired by Gandhian principles.

There is great resonance of the historic salt march at Dandi with the courageous Montgomery Bus Boycott against racial segregation in United States. Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese leader learnt from Gandhiji that for a doctrine of peace and reconciliation to be translated into practice, one absolute condition needed is fearlessness. Aung San followed this and it was the secret of her success amid all the darkness and loneliness against a brutal and hostile regime. Even present US President Barack Obama sees Mahatma Gandhi as an inspiration.

Gandhiji is alive and active in the modern world, his teaching followed by social and religious leaders, American human rights activist or Palestinian leader, Mubarak Awad who believes in non-violence. Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Buddhist leader lays emphasis on Gandhian principles when he says, "I think we may fail in our attempt to do things, yet we may succeed in correct action when the action is authentically non-violent, based on understanding, based on love.

151 Essays

89

To conclude we can say that most of the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi hold relevance even in today's world. The path shown or followed by Gandhiji at that time still remains a very valid one if somebody chooses to tread on it. In today's scenario, 'Eye for an Eye' is no solution as it only aggravates the situation. Peaceful coexistence, economic independence, respect for women, child centred education and basic education for every one, universal brotherhood-all these principles should serve as a beacon of light to guide humanity to a better world.

Gandhian ways and his ideals seem to be the only solution to overcome the present ever growing problem of terrorism which is leading the world to a doomsday.

Gandhiji was leader of the past runs into the present and marches towards the future. He had always been a leader of the time ahead. No leader either today nor in future can match him with the charisma and calibre and wisdom that he had.

---

1. Stirred to be active; **2. Ignited** to give energy to (something or someone); **3. Endorsed** to support or approve; **4. Desperate** feeling or showing despair; **5. Accumulate** to increase gradually in amount as time passes; **6. Segregation** the policy of keeping people of different races, religions etc separate from each other; **7. Doomsday** the day the world ends or is destroyed; **8. Charisma** a special magnetic charm or appeal.

Vocab Card